THE BOOKMAN

W. L. GEORGE ON AMERICAN LITERATURE

BY DONALD LAWDER

EDITOR'S NOTE.—*The manuscript of this interview with Mr. George, in which his views are expressed with great frankness and originality, was read and corrected by him, so that it may be accepted as authoritative. It is also interesting to add that Mr. George personally suggested its publication in* THE BOOKMAN.

WE are, as a nation, very naive in our conscious desire for approbation of what we have wrought from a wilderness...of the material evidences of a swiftly built civilization. Something (and I would not depreciate its value) of the unalloyed pleasure of a child who views his castle of blocks and asks for our encouragement of his ingeniousness, is evident in our pride in the material America, in our towering skyscrapers, in our steel cities with chimneys aglow from a myriad of blast furnaces, our network of railways, our far sweep of grain fields—evidences of a settlement of a few hundred years in all, and of but scarcely a century in actual expansion.

This characteristic is especially evident to visitors from abroad. Our ships' news reporters board incoming liners off Fire Island and before the Statue of Liberty is fairly in sight off the port bow, have queried our prospective guests for their opinions of New York City, of America in general, and have asked whether their feeling is one of disappointment or of dreams materialized. We make no secret of our desire to please them and, indeed, we infer that if there is anything they might like changed, we would be very glad to see if it can be done.

Having passed through this ordeal and having accepted it in all sincerity as the expression of a laudable curiosity, it is but natural that one of our latest visitors, one who still enjoys the hospitality of these United States, should feel a certain freedom in expressing his views on the literary side

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of our national character, the phase of our development which most appeals to a man of his profession.

And the opinions of W. L. George, the English novelist and feminist, are especially welcome, since his message is not only one of approbation but expresses an earnest desire to make us think more highly of ourselves, at least so far as our literature is concerned.

Mr. George has established for himself in England a very high reputation as a critic, as well as a realist of keen perception. Readers of THE BOOKMAN may remember one of his earlier articles which appeared in the issue of February, 1914, entitled "Who is the Man?". In that article he urged the need of looking forward to the future successors of the then reigning sextet of English novelists: Arnold Bennett, Joseph Conrad, John Galsworthy, Thomas Hardy, Henry James, and H. G. Wells.

Mr. George selected for his entries J. D. Beresford, Gilbert Cannan, E. M. Forster, D. H. Lawrence, Compton Mackenzie, Oliver Onions, Frank Swinnerton, and Hugh Walpole. Time has justified his choice so far as the English reputations of these writers are concerned, although in America our list would surely include Somerset Maugham, and would possibly exclude two of the lesser known whom he named. Certainly we would add Mr. George, whose authorship of the article under discussion precluded the mention of his own name.

Further, Mr. George is known and appreciated in America almost to the extent that he is in his own country, as one of the younger generation of novelists who, even within his comparatively brief writing career, has carved for himself a secure niche in the forces to be reckoned with in the English literature of realism. We may accept him, then, as one of the practitioners and critics of literature whose opinions are of more than passing interest and who, it may be assumed, has a background of ample information on which to base his views of our literature.

Mr. George does not believe America may be accused of self-sufficiency in literature. He believes that we are, if anything, entirely too modest in our appreciation of the work of our novelists.

"In England", said Mr. George, "we used to deplore American fiction. That was because, I believe, the principal books received from the United States were the works of Harold Bell Wright, Gene Stratton Porter and others of that school. But that is not true now. We have learned to value the real American fiction very highly—perhaps more highly than you. I feel a very decided tendency in America to deplore your own literature.

"American fiction is generally a new thing. There was no real American literature until the middle of the last century. That is because your great development westward did not really take place until that period. All your classical literature—Emerson, Hawthorne, Irving, including the poetry of Longfellow and Whittier—was really written by Englishmen living in America. That is, while they were born in America, they were really English in spirit and thought.

"One of the first evidences of real American literature was in the work of your late William Dean Howells. Mark Twain, personally, I do not care for, and I would not include him in the forces which helped to establish a basic literature of your nation. His works were largely burlesque.

"The whole of my code", continued

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Mr. George, "is 'no illusion'. Illusion creates the evil which illusion is supposed to alleviate. Nothing is good in literature which is not the truth. It is possible that Harold Bell Wright and Gene Stratton Porter see the world as they have described it in their novels.

"To me, the main point about American literature is that it is pioneer literature. The landmarks of it are Frank Norris, Jack London, and Theodore Dreiser. Norris presented to me the first sign of the material pioneer. Take 'The Pit' and 'The Octopus'. Both reveal the story of man battling with nature for wealth. 'The Octopus' gets right down to the soil, to vast stretches of land turned into the production of wheat—to the struggle to get this product to the market, to the developing of the West. 'The Pit' deals with the amassing of wealth through speculation in this basic commodity. Thus Norris interpreted the pioneer in terms of materialism.

"Then later comes another trend: the movement of the country from the Middle West to the West and Northwest. This is still materialistic, but it is romantic as well. It deals with the long trails through the woods, the snowy wastes of the Klondike, rich with gold, the far islands of the Pacific, with the ports opening to the Orient. Jack London typifies this movement. London was explosive. He was intoxicated with exuberance. But London expressed this new movement. He expressed an emasculated sexuality, but it all embodied new cultural ideas of America. He had virility; the floating of trees down whirling streams, the prospecting for ore in the mountains, the laying of railways. London was the romantic or emotional pioneer.

"The third period in American pioneer literature is typified by Theodore Dreiser, whom I regard as one of your greatest living novelists. There are many crudities, many signs of an imperfect culture, in Dreiser's novels, but in spite of this, there is an immense vigor and courage, a complete indifference to others, in all he has written. His work is like a skyscraper —huge, bulky, half beautiful, half crude, yet lifting its pinnacle toward the skies. America, having conquered everything else, decides to conquer culture!

"Dreiser is an American of the western universities in his outlook upon life. He has a simple admiration for the recognized means of culture; for good pictures, for the better poetry, for the drama, for grand opera. You see, running through all Dreiser's work, an almost childish enthusiasm for these elements of culture, which in older nations are taken as a matter of course. But this trend is important—it is the first impulse toward culture of the people of the prairies. He is material, romantic, and, in addition to this, he is the cultural pioneer. These are the three big stages of American literature in the last fifty years.

"American literature, you see, is going to be judged as pioneer literature. You find O. Henry compared with de Maupassant. To my mind this is quite an unjust comparison. Both worked from entirely different backgrounds—one from a nation in the process of forming its tastes, the other from a background rich with history, tradition, and culture. There is more truth in one story by Ambrose Bierce than in all O. Henry.

"We come, then, to the conclusion that it is impossible to value American literature in the same way as European literature. And for this there

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is a very definite reason: that America has not been formed like European countries. Nothing but harm can come from your readers or your writers looking to England or the continent for inspiration. Literature, if it is of any value, is the voice of the people.

"If you compare England—what is one thousand years? In America, a thousand years is an eternity. Less than six hundred years takes us back of the discovery of your continent: English literature has been produced steadily since long before the Norman Conquest, indeed since about 900.

"In America, a nation with a very brief life, there is the period from 1600 to the date of its independence in which there was practically no writing. Your ancestors were too busy fighting for their lives among hostile Indians, too busy, also, making the soil yield them a living. There was no leisure class. Another fact to consider is that this country in one century received one-third of its population from abroad: Italians, Russians, Poles, Finns, Scandinavians,—from every corner of the earth they came. This immigration was bound to change the nature of the people and to retard the development of a real basic American literature. So it is impossible to judge American literature by English standards. Therefore, the first thing we want is a form of criticism. That is the need.

"Now, the danger. The danger is that people get traditional—and this is important. The connection of literature can be shown direct from Homer to Fannie Hurst. The danger is that the American who looks down on American literature looks toward English literature. That is a mistake. He has no literature but American. 'American literature for Americans',—that should be your slogan. English literature with its attitude toward class, with its comparative freedom from thought of money, has nothing in common with the pioneer literature of America.

"I see American literature typified by a piece of sculpture executed by G. F. Watts and on exhibition in the Kensington Museum. It is called 'Physical Energy' and it shows a man astride a galloping horse. The man is pulling back on the reins with all his strength, in order to control the animal. It is a beautiful interpretation of energy, vigor, strength. That, to me, is American literature expressed in marble.

"I have no use for the delicacy of James Lane Allen, for instance. He is not a typical American writer—his works lack the energy and virility for which I look to your literature.

"I have lived in Europe for years but I never heard trolley-cars make so much noise as they do in America. They rattle, and clang, and bang! The American who does not get the trolley-car spirit into his novels does not express your life.

"The real fineness of American literature is when it is unbridled. It is naturally energetic. English literature is less aggressive; more balanced, more harmonious. One cannot compare English literature with Russian literature—the works of Turgenev, Andreyev, Dostoyevsky—that is a literature of pessimism. And nothing but harm can come from your looking toward English forms for inspiration and leadership in your country."

Mr. George came to the United States because it interested him—and all his life he has followed that which interested him. He is seeking the heart of our country. His search has led him from New York to Boston, to

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the cattle yards and packing houses of Chicago, to the huge and ever-grinding flour mills of Minneapolis, to the oil fields of Oklahoma, to the vast wheat lands of Kansas, the grimy atmosphere of Pittsburgh. He is probing deep and skilfully and we may be sure that when his search is ended he will have sensed the underlying spirit of our land as clearly and as sincerely as he has the past and the future of our literature.

"WITH A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION"

BY SOPHIE KERR

SOME months ago I read in these pages a delightful little sketch, or essayette, from the facile typewriter of my good friend Charles Hanson Towne. It was called "The Contributor Who Calls", and for those who were not so fortunate as to read it I will say that it accurately described a few of the strange beings who make a practice of calling on the editor in person rather than submitting their brain children coldly to the hands of Mr. Burleson, and letting it go at that —stamps enclosed.

These remarks are no more than an appendix to those of Mr. Towne, but touch on one type of office caller which he neglected,—those who call with a letter of introduction. It is a subject on which I and many others who have worked on the staff of a magazine feel deeply, and from which we have suffered much. I don't know why Mr. Towne was so silent about it—perhaps he has suffered so much he dares not trust himself to speak. I, too, have been a victim many times, but I have not yet reached the voiceless stage in the matter. I am going to speak, and I have a lot to say.

First of all let me state that the letter of introduction has become a very cheap and easy way of "passing the buck". I know the editor of a certain proud "literary magazine" fairly well. He calls me his grandmother—though I am feminine enough to remark right here that he is semi-bald and *at least* fifteen years older than I am! However, if he wants to flatter his masculine vanity.... But that is another story. This man has a cheery habit, when bores infest his office, of saying blithely: "Now that doesn't interest *us*, dear sir; it's quite out of line with *our* editorial policy, but I can tell you just the place for it, and I'll give you a note to someone I know who's on the staff there." Then he takes the form letter addressed to me—I am convinced he has a stock of them on his desk, all ready and waiting—, hands it to his caller, and goes back to his work in a glow of satisfaction. None of his time has been wasted, his caller is happy, all is serene.

Then the caller takes the elevated uptown to my office and confidently hands the letter to the girl in the reception room. She brings it to me, I give one look at it, and send back

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word: "Have gone on a three-year cruise in the South Seas". Because I know the worst. Time was when I used to go out amiably enough, and terrible young men with articles on "The Esoteric Value of the Baked Bean" and terrible old men with articles on "My Reminiscences of William Pszchnutz, first Prohibitionist in Nebraska" and terrible young women with articles on "The Crusade against the Antimacassar" and terrible old women with articles on "Christmas in Many Lands" or "Wedding Customs in Many Lands" (which Robert H. Davis affirms are the oldest special-article subjects in captivity)—yea, these and many more as futile did I see, all because I could not believe that any human being would so consistently abuse the decencies of the letter of introduction as the aforesaid downtown editor. I hope he reads this. Not that I expect him to repent—but he will know that his little scheme has ceased to work.

A friend of mine, and a very good friend, once sent a woman to me with a letter of introduction, and I broke into my busiest hour and went out to see her. She was a stout, peevish-looking woman, with a manuscript in her hands, and she began by saying, "Of course I know that editors never accept anything from new writers."

"What else do you know that isn't so?" I inquired at once.

The entente thus being established she told me that she wrote stories, stories that were "just as good"—every editor knows and groans at that phrase—as many stories that were published, but because of the hide-bound narrowness of editors none of them had ever been accepted. She knew, beyond question, that the way all new writers got their start was by getting acquainted with the editor, because all editors bought nothing except from their friends and relatives.

There was much more in the same strain.

At last she left her manuscript, and I took it in to our fiction department and asked for a report. I got it, and it was as follows:

"This story was submitted by mail several weeks ago, and was returned because in form, plot, characters and style it is a direct copy of Mrs. Rinehart's 'Bab'."

And in my letter returning the story to the fat lady I told her so, and never heard from her again. I fear that her opinion of editors, however, has not been improved.

Recently I traced the course of a letter of introduction and figured out the merry passing from one to another of the hopeless individual who had the letter. The trail began with a financier, more noted for the amount of money he has made than for the scrupulosity of his ways of making it. Through racial and religious reasons his wife had become interested in a young-woman-out-of-a-job. Wife reported to husband. Husband gave the young woman a letter to a man who is a major stockholder in a publishing house. Major Stockholder passed the young woman along to the President of the Company. President passed her along to the General Manager. General Manager passed her along to me. The trail ends there, but I will not go into the gory details. In the words of Henley, "My head is bloody, but unbowed".

For the letter of introduction always implores a favor and sometimes subtly implies a threat. "If you don't look out for the friends of the Big Man in your company, you'd better look out for yourself", you can read between the lines of many of them. The man

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or woman who has something to offer besides his or her own needs can well afford to dispense with any such dubious ally. It creates ill-will on sight.

I could go on indefinitely telling of others who have come to me with letters or cards from friends or acquaintances. The mysterious dark lady who wanted to read manuscripts and thought herself particularly well fitted to do it because she "had traveled and known life"—her own phrase. The little Fluffy just out of boarding school whose "Cousin Ella knows your friend Mr. Torrington, and got him to write this letter for me"—Little Fluffy having nothing to offer any employer save the fact that she is "just crazy about reading", and thinks she'd "enjoy the literary atmosphere of a magazine"; the young man who wants to know "if you're in the market for a series of live, snappy stories on film stars at home?"—he got his letter of introduction from a man who used to be one of our supernumerary advertising solicitors, a man whom I hardly knew by sight. Oh well, they were legion and among them all I remember only one who had the least glimmer of being useful, or possessing an idea. She was sent by Booth Tarkington—and I herewith give him this public free commendation. *He* is no letter-of-introduction sinner.

Recently an old friend of mine telephoned me and said: "You know some people in motion-pictures, don't you?"

"I know one director, one head of a scenario department, and one man who edits a film magazine," I replied, adding cagily, "but I know none of them well."

"Let me have letters of introduction to all of them, will you?" he asked. "The daughter of a man I know wants to go into the movies,—I don't suppose she has any real talent, but she's wild to do it, and I promised her father I'd help her."

"Sir," said I, gathering my courage, "you won't help her through me, for it is my invariable rule not to give a letter of introduction unless it is to someone I know personally, and who I am sure will really want to see the person for whom the letter is written. If daughter has looks and talent she can get in without letters. If she hasn't, it would be nothing less than a mean advantage for me to take of my acquaintances to send her to them. Why should busy working people have their time wasted in this way?"

"But I've *promised* these letters from you," said my friend, stiffly.

"Then you made unwarrantable use of my name," said I, "and you can just unpromise them."

Now that the thing is over I reflect that at least I stuck to my principles,—even though I lost an alleged friend.

There have been times, I admit, when I have been cornered and unable to put up such a fight. In those cases, and there have only been two or three, I have given the desired letter, and promptly got another one off by mail, warning that such and such a person was going to call with a letter from me which was given under duress, and that there would be no offense on my part at any brusqueness with which the caller might be treated. If this is hypocrisy, all I have to say is, I would there were more who practised it.

Let us, all of us, who suffer from people-who-call-at-the-office-with-letters-of-introduction, form a club, without dues, meeting-place, or officers; the only qualification for membership to be our willingness to swear that never, never, no never will we give a letter of introduction unless we

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know that the person to whom it is addressed actually has need of the wares or the services of the person to whom the letter is given. Then will the millennium be with us, and life will bloom and burgeon as the rose!

JAMES BRANCH CABELL: AN INTRODUCTION

BY JOHN J. GUNTHER

THE appearance in the field of American letters of James Branch Cabell is a phenomenon scarcely explicable. Here is a writer who stands opposed to everything held holy by the general reading public of today. There is no "gladness" in his books, no smug morality, no sodden sentiment. A man could not be less a Puritan than Cabell. He has no sweet and canting optimism, no deference to the Godly Principles of Life as set down by Dr. Frank Crane. He strives, not to shield illusions, but destroy them, not to glorify ideals but, mocking, laugh at them.

It is important to remember that Cabell laughs. In rejecting contemporary thoughts and practices, in his decision that life is a pretty sorry muddle, he never displays the savage intolerance of Artzybashev nor the undiluted pessimism of Hardy or Joseph Conrad. He plays with conventions, shatters illusions, dispels ideals—and then wrings wry humor from the residue. In his novels the essential protagonists are deprived of their faith in the world and themselves, but none of them sinks finally in utter hopelessness: always Cabell, bestowing upon them his own sense of humor, shows them the redeeming light as a tolerant "resignationism". The universe, they seem to say, is a bad sort of place, but as long as we are here we may as well make the best of it. Thus Cabell, ironical, cynical, discards the whole mass of ideals and illusions the human race conventionally accepts and then, like Anatole France, laughs for good measure.

Cabell stands, moreover, resolutely opposed to the modern spirit of literature in so far as that spirit is Realism unadulterate. He tries not at all to give a critical picture of the life he sees about him, as do nine-tenths of our modern novelists, from Bennett to Sherwood Anderson. He has no interest in Mr. Wells's schemes for world readjustment, nor in autobiography as presented by Mr. Beresford and Mr. Mackenzie, nor in the Freudism and psychoanalysis of Miss Sinclair and Miss Richardson.

On the contrary, he has little concern with the twentieth century except that now, as ever, certain mysterious laws of human nature, as true and irrevocable in Shakespeare's day as in our own, govern mortal behavior and the complexities of man's existence. Indeed most of his work is laid in times long past: in eighteenth-century England in one book, in fifteenth-century France in others, and in the rest—the finest ones—in a shadowy valley inde-

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finable as to place, and of the dim mediæval past, Cabell's beloved Poictesme. Here he is free to create his own especial atmosphere and to manœuvre his characters unbound by present-day conventions. Here men kill and women love, while physical nature, always important with him, looks knowingly on. Thus it seems to me that as an artist Cabell has chiefly two aims: to project his own unique personality through the medium he chooses to utilize, and by his art to recreate that medium into vivid, palpitating life. This medium, for his major work, ostensibly is mediæval Poictesme; in reality, of course, it may be said to exist in all lands and times as the dream-world of its creator.

But Cabell is more than a weaver of pretty oldtime tapestries. If, as Lafcadio Hearn says, realism is truth, "which alone gives value to any study of human nature", then Cabell essentially and always is a realist. His characters are truly motivated; whether the scene is modern Virginia or fifteenth-century France they are vivid, actual; Jurgen as well as Kennaston lives. To argue that Cabell is unswervingly a romanticist because he uses the materials of Conan Doyle's "The White Company" and Rider Haggard's "She", is as absurd as to hold that in "Nostromo" Conrad is intrinsically nothing but a romanticist because the plot remotely suggests Ouida's "Under Two Flags". But this pigeonholing of an author is valueless and petty, and I go into the matter only because most of the current critical pother over Cabell is due to this notion that the man is but an idle romancer.

Merely that Cabell strays from the conventional tracks of the contemporary novel in his method and shows a rigid indifference in his philosophy to the views of the people who presumably will read his books, does not designate him as a unique or particularly significant spirit in the world of literature. But in Cabell there is something more. What constitutes that something more this paper sets out to explain.

II

Cabell's first novel, "The Eagle's Shadow", published in 1904, is thoroughly frivolous and second-rate; all of his books, for that matter, which, like "The Eagle's Shadow", deal with contemporary life, represent him at his worst: witness "The Rivet in Grandfather's Neck", a story almost as maudlin as the title indicates; and slightly better, "The Cords of Vanity". This latter, a recital of the amorous adventures of a cynical poet, is by no means without distinction; in it glimpses may be seen of Cabell at his very best. His only other novel treating of modern times is the excellent "The Cream of the Jest", and in the "Jest"—of which more anon—much of the action in its setting is mediæval.

When Cabell gives his imagination absolute free rein, and turns centuries back for his plots and their backgrounds, he does vastly better work. In evidence we have the four volumes of tales: "The Line of Love" and "Chivalry", love stories of fifteenth-century France and England; "Gallantry", stories of Chesterfieldian England; and "The Certain Hour", love stories of ten poets—including Herrick, Pope, and Shakespeare—, each of which presents that certain hour in the poet's life wherein he was required to choose between his existence as a poet and his existence as a lover, the two, with Cabell, being always incompatible. Then there are "The Soul of Melicent", a spirited ad-

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venture romance, a good part of "The Cream of the Jest", and particularly "Jurgen", Cabell's masterpiece, these last three being created so far entirely out of the imagination as to defy location in definite environments.

The tales are uneven in merit. Some of them are sentimental, dull, constructed all on the same pattern—one knows that the hero will emerge unscathed with the heroine in his arms after a carefully and artificially turned climax. And some of them, on the contrary, are pure gems of sheerest beauty, beauty of style and beauty of evoked atmosphere combining in an exquisite loveliness. Cabell handicaps himself frequently by writing about characters difficult to realize: Shakespeare, for example, Falstaff, Villon, and Marlowe. But his Shakespeare story "Judith's Creed", is to me a better assay of the man than Shaw's "Dark Lady" (though this is not saying much), and if his Villon story does not compare with "A Lodging for the Night" as a feat of technical skill, it at least creates a truer atmosphere. Some of the tales are unforgettable, and it seems to me that the ultimate test of a story of this type, one written solely for the author's delectation and the reader's, is its ability, its potency, to bring the reader back, to make him read again. And one comes back to such stories as "Balthasar's Daughter" and "The Scapegoats", just as surely as he comes back to "The Sire de Maletroit's Door", or Maurice Hewlett's "Quattrocintesteria".

"The Soul of Melicent" (now published under the title of "Domnei"), a tale recounted with spirit and beauty and a joyous gusto, deals with a mediæval love that embroils in war whole continents — the lovers fairly go through fire and water—before it finally is consummated—to find disillusion in the consummation. Here Cabell strikes his keynote; his later books without exception iterate it. The progress through life of all his heroes is a journey during which, one by one, their illusions are lost, their hopes shattered, their faith in the world as a glorious place destroyed. This, of course, is simply the philosophy, deeply pessimistical, of Cabell himself.

The point is illustrated sharply by "The Cream of the Jest", a book superbly well done; Cabell issues from it a polished craftsman of the choicest order. Here the protagonist is Felix Kennaston, poet (Cabell's men are invariably poets or lovers), who, unable to find satisfaction in the life about him, constructs for himself a dream-world, and therein silently and ecstatically worships the phantom woman he creates. The end, of course, is bitter, poor Kennaston being brought abruptly back to earth by the discovery that the sigil by which he unlocks his supernal universe, and which he regards as something profoundly marvelous and transcendental, is nothing more than the broken tin cover of a cold-cream jar.... The point is further illustrated by "The Rivet in Grandfather's Neck" and "The Cords of Vanity", in which Rudolph Musgrave and Robert Townsend, respectively, fail as lovers; particularly is it illustrated by "Jurgen".

It is in "Jurgen" that we find the full anthesis of the Cabell powers. Here, as a distinguished English novelist said, is a book to make Americans proud. Here Cabell has unleashed all his wit, all his fancy, all his poet's gift. We have in "Jurgen" a racy tale that includes a visit to the Garden between Dawn and Sunrise, where men see their illusions, a tour through hell, and a chat with God. Flitting across its pages we meet in a series of fan-

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tastic adventures a grand miscellany of nymphs and hamadryads, knights, witches, and philosophers, besides Merlin, Guinevere, Aphrodite (as Anaïtis), Helen of Troy, Satan, God in several forms—and the characters of some of Cabell's earlier books! The locale is limited only by the frontiers of the author's imagination—geography and chronology are definitely and forever cast aside.

But in "Jurgen" we have more than a chain of fanciful mediæval incidents. There are trenchant allegory, subtle satire, mordant irony. The book sparkles wit and humor. Moreover, "Jurgen" has a plot—relatively a simple one. Jurgen, pawnbroker of Poictesme, journeys forth in search of his wife, whom Koshchei (one of Cabell's disguises for God) has spirited away—and also, for Jurgen is a poet and a sentient being, in search of "justice", some scheme by which the universe is ruled. Inevitably Jurgen's illusions and ideals are scattered and lost as he travels on; he meets the great women of his dreams, Guinevere and Anaïtis and Helen, and discovers them faulty and human (except Helen, the unattainable); finally, convinced that in life there is no "justice", nor order, nor essential meaning, he comes back to his commonplace wife, whom Koshchei, amazed, returns... "Jurgen", it is sadly necessary to append, was suppressed soon after its publication last fall by an anti-vice society, which termed it "vicious and indecent". This is the organization, be it remembered, which has sought in the past to bar from circulation such pornography as the work of Hardy, Flaubert, and Balzac, and the Old Testament published in a newspaper as a serial...

Cabell has ventured into non-fiction with "From the Hidden Way", a volume of verse on the whole unimportant, and a book of essays, "Beyond Life". The essays, purporting to be a defense of his romantic ideal, are really most notable for their delightful comments on various questions and problems, from the origin of religion to Prohibition; for the brilliant criticisms of a number of writers, including Marlowe, Dickens, and Harold Bell Wright (the grouping is mine); and especially for the evidence they give of Cabell's philosophy of life. The book, binding up the fragments of his views as they are expressed in the novels, and presenting them—between the lines—in a moderately organic form, amounts practically to a commentary on the whole of life as Cabell sees it. That view, uncompromisingly pessimistic in that it holds life to be meaningless, "the truth an illusion, and man a botch", is yet in the final estimate not altogether black, inasmuch as it mirrors Cabell looking back disillusioned, open-eyed, mildly disgusted, but nevertheless resolved to laugh and shrug rather than to vilify and condemn, and to make the best of matters.

III

All of Cabell's books are markedly similar in their general features—all are unmistakably stamped with their creator's unique and idiosyncratic personality. Bennett somewhere voices a platitude when he affirms that all imaginative art is to a great extent necessarily autobiographical; Cabell carries the practice as far as it can be carried. Every one of his heroes is unquestionably himself, and in some of the books two or even three of the characters are Cabell. Kennaston in the "Jest", Musgrave in the "Rivet", Townsend in "The Cords of Vanity", all are slices of the Cabell ego; Charteris, the chief spokesman and protag-

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onist, who appears in nearly all the books, is obviously Cabell; even the gay rogue Jurgen, I suspect, reflects the ideals and illusions of his creator's youth.

It is natural, then, that all the books should be so closely knit together as they are, so manifestly molded of the same materials. For one thing there is the special Cabell brand of humor, sparkling from every page. It may be delicate and mischievous, as in "Jurgen", or courtly, as in "Gallantry", or subtly ironic and sceptical, as in "Beyond Life". It is always present: fanciful, light, mocking, and always peculiarly Cabellian.

Closely allied to his humor is his never-absent irony. Cabell, fundamentally a genial sceptic, can comment on nothing without sardonically bantering it. But that irony is seldom bitter, never savage, almost always tolerant. There is no passion, no spirit of agony, in Cabell's pessimism: disgusted with life, perhaps, he is nevertheless decided fully to enjoy it. He plays with his illusions as soon as they are lost.... Perhaps the best single example of his humorous irony is furnished by the appendix to "Beyond Life", wherein he prints under the caption "Tributes from the Press", all the most damning criticisms the newspapers and reviews have given him in his career!

Cabell's prose style, uniformly excellent in all the books, is at its best, for polished perfection, in "Beyond Life"; for richness and color, in "The Soul of Melicent". It is a highly artificial style, smacking, occasionally, of the midnight oil, and as Cabell himself describes it, "finicky and involved and inverted". But characterizing it are such a meticulous perfection of phrasery and such an indefinable rhythmic swing, that as masters of prose rhythm only two men living whom I know surpass him: George Moore and W. H. Hudson. Moreover, Cabell is a poet. The most delightful and striking flashes of imagery shine from his pages. A summer night is described as "bland", a sky at sunset as "dusty palpitating gold". A villain "rustles into the stillness", we hear "blurred gusts of song and laughter", shadows "troop with a wild grace", and a girl is "fire-new from the heart of an ancient sunset". We find "a neglected orchard, sunsteeped and made drowsy by the murmur of bees", that "the sky, washed clear of stars, sprawled above, a leaden monotonous blank", and that the "stars grew lustreless before the sun". This, it seems to me, is the language of an artist.

Cabell has an extraordinary vocabulary—and an irritating one. He is forever using strange and recondite words that none but himself understands. On exhibition, for instance (I pick but a dozen examples out of two hundred available), are such rare words as *susurrous, siccative* and *ventripotent;* obsolete words as *pression* and *orgulous;* and words which I can find in no dictionary, as *castematation, munstrus,* and *bruice.* His extreme aversion to the hackneyed leads him to use these curiosities, I suppose; otherwise he has simply determined never to use a short word where a long one will do. This, of course, is an eccentricity, but it is also pedantry, affectation; surely he goes too far when he calls a *platitude* a *venerable conjunction of words,* and a *rake* a *cardiacal buccaneer.*

But Cabell's vocabulary is by no means his only idiosyncrasy. His bad habit of repeating bodily whole phrases and paragraphs, his fatuous practice of dedicating books to Mrs. Grundy and saddling them with "auctorial inductions", the annoying reit-

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eration of his favorite phrases, such as *in fine* and *by ordinary*, his use in "Beyond Life" of a new system of quotation marks—here are traits of a freakish individuality, indeed. But some of his vagaries are more pleasant; as, for instance, his inordinate love of mystifying the reader, what Wilson Follett calls "his inestimable gift for hocus-pocus". In "Jurgen" he manufactures a great number of names and presents them solemnly as genuine mythological personages, and he leaves for the reader to explain far more episodes than he himself clears up. One can read almost anything into "Jurgen".... Again, there is his habit of introducing into each of his novels characters from most of the rest; his people continually wander in and out of his books, in much the manner of Compton Mackenzie's folk.

But his supreme caprice, and the supreme example of everything in humor, irony, and fancy that we may term Cabellian is his sedulous attempt to prove that someone else wrote most of his books. He credits "From the Hidden Way" to a group of pre-Renaissance poets, and prefixes to the volume an introduction explaining how he happened upon the poems and translated them from the French. Of course the helpless reviewers and critics had no reason to suspect that Cabell was indulging in one of his pretty tricks, and a noted anthologist even went so far as to hint acquaintancy with the originals! The Jurgen legend Cabell declares to be authentic mythology, and he duly quotes "authorities" to prove the point. He appends a bibliography to "Melicent", stating that he translated the story from the French of one Nicolas de Caen, and that other investigators had done likewise before him. Two volumes of the tales also he credits to this Nicolas, whom he describes as a celebrated chronicler, familiar, of course, to everyone. Thus diligently does Cabell arrange his proofs that he is not to be held responsible for his best writings!

IV

The mystery of Cabell! How to account for his personality? How is it possible for a scion of one of the oldest families of Virginia, with long lines of staid colonial ancestors forever shadowily chaperoning him, to write as he writes? For Cabell, born in Richmond in 1879, has so distinguished a lineage that he turned genealogist, seeking to trace back for centuries his forebears. This seems to me important as a factor in shaping him as he is. What impulse sent Cabell pursuing the mediæval lore? What caused his absorption in a bygone era? This research, carrying him abroad and plunging him into dusty manuscripts and records, was the prime mover, perhaps, that inclined him to his later work. More probably, however, there is something born in the man, as much a part of him as his use of *desiderate* for *desire*. Very early, in fact, when he was a student at William and Mary, a love for mediæval French literature drew him into special seminars and investigations. He even for a time became a teacher of French. This to me is the cream of a gigantic jest: Cabell a professor!

For a long time after he took to writing he remained in oblivion—while the critics were worshiping such divinities as Hamlin Garland and Winston Churchill. But now he is little by little acquiring recognition. He will never be popular, I dare say, and I thank Heaven for that, but it is at least encouraging that now most of the critics welcome and praise him. Ras-

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coe and Mencken stood by him from the start. Wilson Follett never neglects an opportunity to sing his praises in "The Dial"; "The Nation" salutes him as "America's master ironist" (which is conservative: can "The Nation" name another ironist in America?); "The New Republic" is corrupted by "Mr. Cabell's seductive prose", and declares that "The Cream of the Jest" evidences "a craftsmanship rarely equaled in American literature". John Macy and James Huneker, eminently reliable critics, bow low to Cabell as a master; likewise such diverse fellow novelists as Upton Sinclair and Joseph Hergesheimer. Even "The Atlantic" praises him, and the London "Athenæum". Hugh Walpole said of "Jurgen": "If America is looking for a book to show to Europe, here it is".

Thus most of the more dependable critics agree in holding Cabell a writer deserving serious attention. But he manifestly has limitations—the author of "Jurgen" is a human being. His masterpieces are few: of the twelve books only "The Soul of Melicent", "The Cream of the Jest", "Beyond Life", and "Jurgen" are indubitably first-rate. His style is frequently annoying, often verbose; his vocabulary is impossible. Most of the early short stories are trivial, and "The Eagle's Shadow" and "The Rivet in Grandfather's Neck" are mediocre pieces of work. Occasionally there is a descent into the yawning pit of sentimentality.

But what remains! We have in Cabell a stylist of distinction, a painter of beautiful images, a suave and subtle ironist. We have a juggler of ideas, a nimble wit, a sceptical and tolerant philosopher. We have a queer tricksy fellow, and a deft craftsman who tells his story well. And Cabell consistently improves with practice; his work steadily grows better and better; the last two novels, "Jurgen" and "The Cream of the Jest", were written by a genuine creative artist. More, Cabell has at least fifteen productive years before him. It would be a rash critic who would declare him the most important figure in contemporary American letters, but an exceedingly conservative one who would not grant him to be the most interesting.

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HAMSTRINGING SHAKESPEARE

BY CHARLES EDWARD RUSSELL

NEWS from the sages skilled in such matters foretold some time ago for our stage a notable, and perhaps even a compelling revival of Shakespeare. All of the markings on the theatrical goosebone that have showed forth these glad tidings I have never pretended well to understand; but it seems that what Shakespeare we have draws unwonted and applauding throngs, that many new Shakespearian ventures are planned, that always after so long an interval the general taste for Shakespeare is sure to return, and that about this time the calendar should disclose the due ripening of the period.

In that case the hour may also be gracious to suggest one little question. Should Shakespeare on the stage be spoken in the manner of a sane person of full faculties solely striving to transmit meaning, or should it be uttered as a fashion of chant, the meaning subordinated to the sound? If practice weighs for aught, the faith of American and English actors that in our times have essayed Shakespeare has been chiefly with the chant. I will give a few examples. In the third scene of the second act of "Much Ado About Nothing", at the end of the wit-matching between Beatrice and Don Pedro is this:

BEATRICE. But I beseech your grace, pardon me; I was born to speak all mirth and no matter.

DON PEDRO. Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you; for out of question you were born in a merry hour.

A church by daylight could not be clearer than the play of contrasted meanings here; sitting book in hand one might be exasperated to have the antithesis pointed out, so simple is it; and yet I have witnessed thirteen performances of "Much Ado" by ten different companies, and have never heard Don Pedro's reply read from the stage otherwise than thus:

Your silence most *offends* me.

Ten actors in a total of ten, American and English, and some of them of note and bearing, have so read this line as to annihilate the thought in it. The thing seems incredible but it is literally true, I do assure you. I have been at pains to make search of the mystery, and old actors, being interrogated, have furnished the lights of a various wisdom: 1. The line is thus grossly misread because hoary tradition and custom are so to mangle it. 2. The line is misread because it sounds better that way; in other words, the theory of the chant. I hesitate to offer a third, but will venture the layman's risk. The line is misread because the gentlemen that hamstring it never stopped to consider the thought they maim.

Not the casual and the obscure among our actors have performed these hellish pranks with the greatest

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of English verse; the eminent, the admired, nay, even those reputed to be learned and discreet often walk through Shakespeare battering down meanings like a man that drives palings. The late Beerbohm Tree was of this estimation; he won a title for his elaborate, painstaking, and sometimes painsgiving productions of Shakespearian plays. Yet in "Hamlet" he invariably said:

Thrift, thrift, Horatio! The funeral baked meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage *tables*.

If the scene had contained or warranted a question whether it were marriage beds, stools, or candlesticks that were furnished forth this reading might be scholarly and accurate. As the text is vouchsafed to us it was neither. I once brought to the attention of an American actor noted for his studious habits this most strange assault upon sense and reason. He said that Tree's controlling purpose was to utter the lines melodiously. Off the stage (he admitted) human beings ordinarily resort to spoken words for the purposes of expressing ideas or feelings, but he thought that the drama was privileged no less than the opera and that blank verse on the stage might legitimately be chanted. If this theory is correct, Mr. Tree certainly made a liberal application of it. The lines I have cited he uttered rapidly and without one variation in emphasis until he arrived at *tables*, upon which the inflection fell from high to low with a vehemence most astonishing. So far as the subtle and inner meaning of the lines was concerned he might as well have spoken in an unknown tongue.

HAMLET. My father—methinks I see my father.
HORATIO. Where,
My lord?
HAMLET. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Mr. Tree read this, "In my mind's *eye*". So read every other Hamlet I have ever heard, with but two exceptions. The majority are a notable company; Hamlets have been a numerous tribe in my acquaintance. Yet can there be the least chance that Horatio will think Hamlet sees his father with ears or nose? The eye with which Hamlet sees his father here differs from other eyes in that it is the eye of the mind. No one unfamiliar with the text could possibly get that impression from the customary stage reading of it. But if we are to come from our closets to have the thoughts we admire torn thus limb from limb methinks it were better to remain indoors.

"Hamlet" has ever the roughest handling from nature's journeymen, acolytes, brethren of the chanting school of thought, and others; I know not why. My note-book tells me of famous performers that have said:

Look here, upon this picture and on this,
The *counterfeit* presentment of two brothers.

And I have heard Claudiuses that said:

Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a *sorrow*,
A face without a heart?

One of the assassins guilty of this outrage was of high esteem in his time as a leading man of unusual excellence. Give him modern prose to read upon the stage and he would utter it with wisdom and discretion. It was only when he entered the precincts of Elizabethan blank verse that he laid aside his wits and became a verbal berserker.

Again:

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in *your* philosophy.

Thus they utter it—on the stage. No man would so say it anywhere else.

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Some fateful, potent witchcraft must dwell within those lines: even a student like Lawrence Barrett had no amulet against it, and fell with the rest. But shall we suppose Hamlet was marking a difference between his own philosophy and that of his fellow student at Wittenberg? We must if we accept such a reading—on other than grand opera bases, of course.

Mr. Booth, whose Hamlet remains in the mind of every person that saw and heard it the enduring ideal, was one of the few portrayers of the part in our times that read always with research and accuracy. It is only fair to say that E. H. Sothern, whose Hamlet of all Hamlets is most like that of Mr. Booth, is the other who, for instance, perceived that Hamlet's vision of his father was mental, not physical.

About some lines, of course, the reading is debatable,—this or that, as we interpret the character or the scene. There is such a passage in "Macbeth" where Duncan's murder is discovered, and Malcolm and Donalbain come in:

DONALBAIN. What's amiss?
MACBETH. You are and do not know it.

Henry Irving always read this with a marked rising inflection on *it*, as if the line were a question, and I have heard no less an authority than Alfred Ayres warmly defend this conception. It may be right, although no editor of the text has thought of it and the succeeding lines hardly hold up such a theory. Irving seemed to think that Macbeth was simulating astonishment that Duncan's two sons did not know of the loss of a father. Unless we can accept that view certainly the only reading is:

You are and do not *know* it.

Irving's practice is not enlightening, for he was probably the worst Shakespearian reader the age has known. If he read this line correctly it was the only antithetical passage in all "Macbeth", as he played it, in which he happened to go right. Some other things may be so bad they become good, but surely not the reading of Shakespeare. We may say in charity that Macbeth was a part Irving should never have essayed; he was in every way unfitted for it. Lest I should seem to speak wantonly of a most conscientious actor and kindly, polished gentleman that another nation has decreed to honor, I transcribe the following citations from my note-book on his Macbeth:

MACDUFF. I know this is a joyful trouble to you
But yet, 'tis one.
MACBETH. The labor we delight in physics pain.

Act II, Scene 3.

Irving read this, "The *labor* we delight in physics pain", thereby missing the whole point of the sentence.

"Thy *bones* are marrowless", and "*Take* any shape but that", said Irving. He had a plenty of companionship in such errancy in that play, certainly. Miss Terry, for instance, achieved one of the most amazing slips ever heard on any stage. In the second scene of the second act, where Lady Macbeth is waiting for the return of her husband from his fatal errand, there occurs in her fearful soliloquy these lines:

Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't.

Miss Terry, charming actress as she was, always read this:

Had he not *resembled*
My father as he slept....

But he might have resembled anyone else and have had no such effect upon Lady Macbeth. It was the resemblance to her father that unnerved her. I have never heard any other

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Lady Macbeth make this strange error, but the stage was indebted to Miss Marlowe for restoring the true and full meaning of the line.

Most Macduffs in the passage before quoted say:

> I know this is a joyful *trouble* to you....

and I think they all say:

> Most sacrilegious murder hath broke *ope*
> The Lord's anointed temple.

This always seemed to me a powerful illustration of the chant idea, for else no human hypothesis can explain it. Mme. Modjeska had once a Macduff that rose superior to sonority and delivered the line according to its meaning. I think he left the stage soon afterward.

When Mr. Sothern came to do Macbeth he broke away from several misreadings so long consecrated by stage practice they had become hoary-headed. One of his innovations touched yet another of these debatable questions. It is in Act V, Scene 5, just before the final struggle, thus:

> MACBETH. Wherefore was that cry?
> SEYTON. The queen, my lord, is dead.
> MACBETH. She should have died hereafter.
> There would have been a time for such a word.

Mr. Sothern read this: "She should have died *hereafter*", but the customary reading, followed by Irving, is "she *should*". The point is material; the meaning of the passage pivots upon it. If *"should"* is right it means that Lady Macbeth's death is untimely; she died too young. If *"hereafter"*, it means that Macbeth is so ringed around with fate and horrors he no longer cares nor feels. Life to him has ceased to mean anything; even to the death of his wife he is indifferent. All of us could see that this was Mr. Sothern's conception of the scene; he revealed it again in the way he read "Out, out, brief candle", and the lines following. Therefore his choice of *"hereafter"* as the targe of his emphasis was inevitable. I do not know what those who prefer *"should"* make of the remainder of that speech, "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow...", nor if they ever consider in Act III, "I have lived long enough", and what comes after. Hark back to the context, is the simple old rule of the closet student; if it avails not here this must be the only place where it deserts the diligent inquirer.

But say that these lesions are due not to stage tradition nor to the license of the chant, but only to inattention; then assuredly either the stage has suffered a sad decline or biography furnishes us some fantastical lies. By its accounts actors of vanished times such as Macready, the elder Kean, and Forrest were wont to give to the study of the verbalism of the texts such long, toiling, pondering inquisition as is not told of any actor of our day. There is something about Kean's having studied one line in "Lear" for thirty years and having frequently revised and developed his reading of it. I know well enough that Edwin Booth, even in the last fourteen years of his career, changed and rechanged and changed again more than one of his Hamlet readings, and to the last was recasting those auxiliaries that are called "business". Hamlet, one might say, he had been playing all his life; the world had long acclaimed him its master limner of that rôle; and he seemed never to think he had sounded all the depths of its thought.

Of all the arts the actor's is the most evanescent; its only possible memorial is contemporaneous opinion. Macready, Kean, and the others may not really have been the giants their own age believed them; yet must there

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still be a reason for their winning to a place among the Immortals while the players of later days are but shadows on the dial. Modern actors brought in a more elaborate stage-craft, more elaborate accessories, new conceptions of the feat scenic, always enlarging the purely sensuous appeal. To this gorgeous picture-making the study of the meaning of the text lagged subordinate; naturally, for the two purposes could not well cohabit in the same managerial mind. Yet the text, the text, always the text, was the study of the ancients, and there remains nothing else to account for their enduring fame. And this, too, is natural and reasonable; for if what we say and believe about Shakespeare is true, it is as an overshadowing intellect we do him homage and not for his relations to the paint-frame.

This is coming to be the view of the actors and managers that now stage his works. The new productions are strikingly simple. Mr. Walter Hampden plays "Hamlet" with almost no scenery, and I think not one intelligent person in his large and interested audiences has felt the lack thereof. In general, the plan now is to have one noncommittal background that will answer for almost every scene, and two or three sets of the simplest design that suggest an atmosphere but make no attempt to picture a locality. Here is not less than revolution in our stage methods; how great a revolution we can grasp if we remember that Henry Irving on his American tours was accustomed to carry seven baggage-cars of scenery.

Thus, in an enlightened modern way, do we return to the ideas of the Globe and the Fountain, when the play was the thing and not the scenic studio, and when the unjaded imagination, from the play's materials and sheer performance, constructed whatever was necessary of Verona or Elsinore, Illyria or Venice. But if we are thus to shift the centre of attack from the sensuous to the intellectual, so much more imperative is the demand for judicious readings and surely so much less is any room for the chant theory of blank-verse delivery. When the mind of the auditor-spectator was distracted with huge, awful constructions, castles, gardens, fountains, and the like, when he was lost amid the mazes of a gorgeous mise en scène, he was in no state to note whether the words spoken amid these glories had any meaning. Perhaps there was no need; costumer and scene painter had supplanted the actor. It is not so now, and he that stands in the centre of a practically empty stage must depend upon himself to create the illusion or there will be none. And with all minds fastened upon him instead of wandering through the circumambient, how, O Tuneful Nine, will he create any illusion if he speak not that which those minds understand? And I protest that at least one-half of the speaking of Shakespeare on our stage tends to be as little understandable as the mouthing of gibberish.

Sometimes the consequences are more than sad. In the third scene of the third act of "Othello", where Iago is beginning to wind his gins about the feet of his chief, occurs this:

OTHELLO. If thou dost love me
Show me thy thought.
IAGO. My lord, you know I love you.
OTHELLO. I think thou dost,
And, for I know thou art full of love and honesty and weigh'st thy words before thou giv'st them breath....

And again:

IAGO. For Michael Cassio
I dare be sworn, I think that he is honest.
OTHELLO. I think so, too.

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I have seen many Othellos and many Iagos, but never one that could withstand the temptation to mangle these passages. "I *think* thou dost", they say, notwithstanding that this reading is out of keeping with the character of Othello, with the key of the scene at the moment, and with all the finer touches of the actor's art. "I *think* that he is honest", reads every Iago. But an Iago off the stage would never thus advertise his duplicity to the man he was trying to entrap. "I think thou *dost*", is the only reading that will fit with the soldier Othello, the man "of a free and open nature that thinks men honest that but seem to be so".

"We must not overrate the intelligence of the audience, you know", observed one actor to whom I protested against this atrocity. "We must give them notice that Iago is a villain." Perhaps it is all here, or much of it. But if I have observed anything about audiences it is that their average intellect is capable of assimilating all that the average performer is capable of producing; and finally, art must be art, on the stage as off.

Nineteen in twenty Portias, according to the testimony of my note-books, say:

> The *quality* of mercy is not strained.

Think of it! When just before are these lines:

> PORTIA. Then must the Jew be merciful.
> SHYLOCK. On what compulsion must I? Tell me that.
> PORTIA. The quality of mercy is not strained.

What, O ye aspiring ladies of the stage, what on earth has "quality" to do with the thought? It is but the poor filler out of the pentameter; the line would have exactly the same meaning if *quality* were omitted. Try it:

> SHYLOCK. On what compulsion must I? Tell me that.
> PORTIA. Mercy is not strained.

Is it not so? And yet of the legion of Portias I have seen, only one, Miss Marlowe, seemed to perceive this simple fact.

Perhaps I have underrated here tradition as a factor in these prodigies. I recall now that in all the plays wherein as a subordinate actor Lawrence Barrett had heard older men's galumphing speech, he read as badly as anybody; but when in his maturity he undertook a play all new to him he read sanely and soberly, with insight and accuracy. Tradition, then, may it be, and thereupon let us take heart of grace. For since the seers have predicted a return of Shakespeare to our stage, and he has been so long gone thence that tradition must have failed in respect to these readings, an intelligence strong enough to discard the paint-pot will doubtless be hardy enough to insist upon rational utterance, and the Shakespearian's cup of joy will be full.

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STEPHEN PHILLIPS IN EVERYDAY LIFE

BY HAROLD D. PHILLIPS

THE life of my brother, Stephen Phillips, in its relation to the everyday world, is but little known, despite his dazzling meteoric literary success. The reason for this general silence is, I think, much the same as in the case of Swinburne—namely, that it is generally felt, even when not actually known, that all that was most inspiring and worth while in both writers found full expression in their creations and that the refuse, so to speak, of their individualities was relegated for the most part to ordinary life. My brother was, however, I imagine, with all his faults, something more of a man—a more robust personality than Swinburne; for, after all, his was no sheltered life but one full of action and adventure under the public gaze, nor was he spared by any means the struggles and vicissitudes that inevitably fall to the lot of a man of genius without finances.

He was brought up in the most orthodox manner. Our father, at one time Precentor and more recently Canon of Peterborough Cathedral, was a man of some dramatic insight and varied dilettante accomplishments; but it was to our mother, with her keenly æsthetic instincts, brilliant intellect, and deeply sympathetic and highly sensitive nature, that Stephen Phillips really owed his genius. He began life with the physique and latent force which go to make up the equipment of a man of action, but these qualifications were nullified more and more as time went on by the singularly perverse and negative character of his ideals.

The incongruity of ideals existing between the output and the daily habits of many poets and artists of all kinds has come to be generally accepted, but in my brother's case the gulf was spanned to some extent by one prevailing element in common—the Hellenic ideal; for, just as the primary source of his inspiration was the Greek drama so was, broadly, the sum of his ethics or rather the lack of them based upon the typical Athenian philosophy of life. My brother was far from being an earnest seeker after truth in any shape or form, nor was he in the least bothered by the psychological problems of the age. He lived solely for the day and by the day, loving (generally, it must be admitted, from a safe distance) the sharp contrasts, rude shocks, and glaring inequalities of the world he lived in merely for the stimulus they afforded his imagination.

As a boy Stephen Phillips was most difficult to manage—turbulent, restless, with at times an almost fiendish temper, and combining extreme sensibility to personal suffering with a positive delight in teasing and torturing his younger and weaker brothers. This was, however, a purely boyish

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phase which he afterward completely outgrew; latterly cruelty of any kind was one form of immorality of which he was never guilty and for which he had no tolerance in others. His unpopularity at school was consistent and extraordinary; and I can recall his return home when about twelve or thirteen years old so broken down with rough handling as to be for some time in the doctor's hands. Of course, this was in the good old days when it was a universally accepted dogma with the English schoolboy that originality and unconventionality even in the smallest details were bad form, and must be eliminated in the most drastic fashion, both by mental and physical castigation.

The natural idiosyncrasies of latent genius were not, however, the sole cause of my brother's persistent persecution, for while in his teens he was more or less morose, in no sense a "good mixer", and very far from the English ideal of a "good fellow". With his teachers he was by no means a favorite, for he took no trouble to conceal his contempt and amusement at their limitations and characteristics; also, like many others who have later in life become famous, he showed no particular ability in his school work, displaying, indeed, an incapacity almost amounting to genius in the elements of science or mathematics. His tastes, of course, naturally ran to the Greek and Latin classics; and here he was on another and a higher plane than either his masters or fellow students, for he would become so engrossed with the beauty of the lines as to be frequently passed in class by quite ordinary youths with a certain linguistic propensity and minds intent for the most part on mere grammatical analysis.

After leaving school my brother worked for a time for the Civil Service; but all that was wild and ungovernable in his temperament rose against so monotonous and unimaginative a career, and when about twenty he joined our cousin Frank Benson's Shakespearian company, starting from the lowest rung of the ladder. As an actor, however, he was never an unqualified success, partly through a want of elasticity in his movements, but still more through an all-pervading self-consciousness and lack of abandon which made the complete merging of his identity in the part he was personating an impossibility.

The most important rôle he played was that of Iago, but here he overreached himself by a hyper-subtle conception of the part. In his efforts to avoid all that smacked of the typical stage conception, he created an Iago which went so far to represent the "hypocrisy of frankness" as to almost entirely eliminate any suggestion of the saturnine and sinister and to give the impression of a straightforward, bluff, manly villain unable himself to understand the underlying motive for his persecution of Othello. Benson's troupe was made up for the most part of men of culture, many from Oxford and Cambridge, but a wilder, more daredevil set could hardly have been found in the England of that time. My brother was among the most reckless, engaging in wildly extravagant practical jokes at the expense of the public, defying all laws and regulations of conduct, and along with his boon companions frequently coming into collision with the police. This thirst for excitement and sensation, unsatisfied by nightly appearances before the curtain, grew apace until it reacted upon his nervous system and he was compelled to leave the stage

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and earn his living for a time as an army coach in history. He knew practically nothing of his subject, while his predecessor had been quite renowned for historical research; but the friend who recommended him for the position believed implicitly in the enormous potentialities of the man, once his interest was aroused, and in the end the adventure justified itself. It was about this time that Stephen Phillips was constantly in touch with our cousin Laurence Binyon, who, discerning as none had done before, the prodigious promise latent in his few early poems, deliberately set to work to stimulate him to greater efforts, the plan being that each should produce a poem once a week and then meet and compare notes.

This was the beginning of my brother's path to fame; but he had to be pushed every step of the way by this gifted and unselfish relative, forced against his will to interview publishers, and to write more and more at their behest until finally "Marpessa" —considered by many the most intrinsically beautiful both in conception and structure of all his works—was given to the world. Following this came his series of poetic dramas which stirred at once to extraordinary enthusiasm not only the more cultured theatregoers but also the most æsthetic literary critics of the day. This almost bewildering success for the time being had, however, the most peculiar and perverse effect on this character. His conceit and self-appreciation were unbounded, and only comparatively inoffensive because coupled with a kind of childish simplicity that more or less disarmed criticism. Unfortunately, however, with plenty of money now at his disposal, he plunged headlong into excitement of every kind and threw himself generally into the life of the senses as distinct from the life of the mind, so that gradually all joy in the sense of inspiration was lost to him, even the poet's ordinary satisfaction in the beauty of his own lines. All this reacted on the quality of his work more and more; and the result was apparent from the time of the production of "Nero" until his death in December, 1915.

It may come as something of a shock to Stephen Phillips's admirers to realize that he was not in the ordinary sense of the word a well-read man, still less what used to be termed a man of letters, for while in odd moments he absorbed with extraordinary facility all that appealed to him in Greek, Latin, and English verse, his acquaintance with even the classics of fiction, still more with literature of a scientific or metaphysical nature, was astonishingly elementary and meagre. It would be difficult, moreover, to say that he was a genuine enthusiast even in his own domain or that he was ever hypersensitive about the successful production of his own plays. Far more absorbed was he in seeking interest and excitement in the incidents of everyday life than in book lore of any kind. In this connection his was the very antithesis of what has been described as the "Boston state of mind", for he held in positive abhorrence the sedentary scholastic type of "litterateur" and even went so far as to shun the society of contemporary writers, preferring, as he often said, the company of rougher and ruder individualities with large and expansive natures to those of his acquaintance who represented purely literary attainment.

Once in his thirst for new sensation he made an expedition on which I accompanied him, to slums in the East End of London, where conditions were

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so hideous and mankind so desperate that few members of the police force would care to pay an official visit unprotected; and then again in another mood he would be genuinely interested in the most frivolous pleasure resorts and even in sauntering about the fashionable West End sections of London observing the costumes of the dandies of Regent Street and Piccadilly.

There has been much talk, some of it exaggerated, as to my brother's dissipated habits, but, with no desire on my part to palliate, I am in a position to know that these were due not to inherent viciousness, but rather to a chronic restlessness of mind and discomfort of body which were always with him,—partly also to the poet's natural horror of greyness and the craving for color and contrast in life at any cost. The root of what proved eventually fatal to his career, however, was a stupendous inertia which grew with years and latterly made almost every form of activity an almost insuperable effort; and for this reason, with all his love of life *per se*, his rôle was generally that of a passive spectator rather than of an actual participant. He was no more capable, for instance, of taking part in the fight for the liberation of Greece as did Byron, than, like that poet, of writing so many lines a day with a view to keeping up his technique.

From the time he left school my brother did no systematic studying whatsoever; what he wrote for a long time was sporadic and incidental,—these poems came into existence merely because in certain moods the pleasure of expressing himself in verse happened to appeal to him for the time being more than any other form of distraction. This, however, does not apply to his larger creations when he was more or less under the care of literary enthusiasts who, recognizing his potentialities, were determined, despite his protests, that they should be developed to the full.

Under such influences and the pressure of circumstances Stephen Phillips would occasionally display a determination and will power altogether alien to his disposition, lounging no longer, but getting grimly to work and writing line after line often against the grain and without any sense, as he told me, of the exaltation born of inspiration; and yet despite this mental condition producing lines which have since been universally acclaimed as among his finest. In common with other creative artists, my brother had the power of expressing and expressing vividly through sheer imagination emotional states to which (except in some unfathomable depths of the subconscious mind) he must have been a total stranger. I well remember the amusement with which we once read a press review of one of his poems in which the critic said in effect: "Here are, indeed, the unmistakable utterances of one whose sympathetic heart bleeds for the sufferings, etc." To my brother, of course, the subject of the poem in question meant little more than a painfully pleasant imaginative thrill, and while, as said before, this is no unusual trait with those of his kind, the utter discrepancy between the man's true realization of tragedy and the intense language in which the poet contrived to depict it, has few parallels.

What I have said so far of Stephen Phillips's idiosyncrasies, while disappointing to any would-be hero-worshipers, will, I think, to those who read between the lines, reveal to a greater extent the full measure of his effortless genius. He was in fact a

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lazy, careless, potential giant never, as far as I can remember, putting in one hard day of study; sometimes, but by no means always, taking the trouble to write down lines constantly emanating from his subconscious mind; at other times, generally under pressure of some kind, uniting for a space his immense but comparatively unused intellectual forces with his natural intuitive genius, and thereby producing those great poetic dramas where human struggles are portrayed with such poignancy and yet expressed and controlled always within the bounds of the finest classical form.

Given even normal energy and enthusiasm, it is safe to say that works possibly not of a higher order but infinitely greater in variety and scope would unquestionably have flowed from his pen.

To few poets, I believe, were given such consistent and influential friends in high quarters. Sir Sidney Colvin, for instance, was for years not only the wisest and most discerning of his literary advisers and critics, but took an almost paternal interest in the man himself—an interest which I am bound in truth to say was not always appreciated, for there was a certain Spartan severity in Sir Sidney's prescriptions for my brother's habits of life which sometimes galled him to the quick.

Nobody in the front rank of the contemporary poets, however, wrote with such generous and unbounded enthusiasm of his work as did William Watson. On the other hand that sublime eclipser of Tennyson's fame as poet laureate, Alfred Austin, is said to have spoken disparagingly of his gifts and to have remarked on one occasion that a man in *his* position could hardly afford to know such a free lance.

At one time my brother knew Oscar Wilde fairly well; but there was not much in common between the consummate dandy and the reckless bohemian, though the latter was certainly to some extent influenced by Wilde's conception of the relations that should exist between the man of genius and the rest of the world, readily endorsing, for instance, the theory that it was bourgeois for a poet to consider the average citizen's ideals of duty and decent living, and holding that people of that type were sufficiently honored with the unpaid debts of people like himself.

Long and intimate were my brother's relations with Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree. To the latter he owed an immense debt for the wide publicity given to his work through the stage, but Sir Herbert's influence was by no means always for the best, for in his endeavors to popularize my brother's works he would frequently suggest byplay to the gallery and so do much to counteract the more idealistic influences of Sir Sidney Colvin.

It would be a great fallacy to imagine, as might easily be done in superficially viewing his career, that Stephen Phillips belonged at all to that dreamy helpless type which, refusing to see clearly the ugliness of life's details, exists in an atmosphere of unreal ideals and cannot in consequence grapple with the grim realities of the world. On the contrary, however much he disapproved of the world and its ways my brother thoroughly understood it, and nothing but his chronic lethargy would have made impossible his success as a business man or even as a politician. He could drive a hard bargain when necessary; and I have known him in his days of destitution to force up a pawnbroker's bid with a consummate wile and insist-

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ency that might have shamed many an experienced salesman.

I have already alluded elsewhere to my brother's singular physical beauty as a young man, to his curiously deliberate and unspontaneous manner, and to his inordinate sense of humor which is the no infrequent companion of a generally unhappy nature, but in that article I said little of what to a great extent redeemed his character and made him at times a very attractive personality.

It should always be borne in mind that my brother's sins were sins against convention for the most part and were committed in the open without any attempt at concealment; and for this very reason attracted an attention seldom bestowed on the meaner and more wary sinner. Then again, he was essentially *un*moral rather than *im*moral and by this I mean that he utterly repudiated throughout his entire life all sense of duty, obligation, or responsibility of any kind. On the other hand his was a big-hearted, generous nature, keenly alive to distress and suffering of all sorts when brought before his immediate gaze; and nothing but the almost hypnotic inertia to which I have so often alluded kept him from doing a great deal of good in a philanthropic way. One very lovable trait in his nature was the big elemental affection which he somehow managed to retain toward relatives utterly unsympathetic both in his days of adversity and of prosperity. He remained, indeed, to the end of his life, simple and unsophisticated in the best sense of the words; alike in thought, manner, and speech in spite of all his varied experiences; and herein lay much that was genuinely charming in the man. His consistent horror and disgust with the conventional morality was the result of its association in his mind with the grim puritanic ugliness of the Victorian ideals. Indeed, for the character of Queen Victoria herself my brother had the greatest aversion, for she represented to him the acme of that prosaic, almost savage, virtue of which we find instances in the works of Dickens and Thackeray.

In conclusion, let me say that with all his keen sense of beauty, Stephen Phillips had little sympathy with or understanding of either painting or music. In both cases his taste inclined to the bizarre, though as regards music it is only fair to say that while he was generally satisfied with a brass band on a promenade, there were moments when Beethoven even in his most remote and difficult works strongly appealed to him.

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NO APOLOGIES NEEDED FOR AMERICAN ART

BY EDNA FERBER

I WISH America would stop being ashamed of its art. I wish it would stop giggling and twisting its fingers with deprecatory embarrassment when it uses the word *art* in connection with America. For years and years we've been told by our European neighbors that when it came to artistic effort America was the idiot stepchild among the nations. We believed it but it's not true. We believed it to such an extent that we tried to write like the Russians. We tried to talk like the English. We tried to paint like the Italians. We tried to philosophize like the Germans. We tried to dress like the French. Anything un-American was artistic. Anything American was crude. We've been suffering from an inferiority complex. Somebody ought to come along and psychoanalyze us. When an American writer wrote a short story that sounded just like a Russian short story it was a good short story. You followed a formula that ran something like this:

Ivan the idiot was sitting behind the great porcelain stove. He was pulling the legs off cockroaches. Now and then he laughed, mirthlessly, hideously. He had just murdered his grandmother, poor old Marushka Stepanovitch. Her body, still warm, lay under the kitchen table. How the fine crimson blood dripped, dripped, dripped. It made a gay spot on the floor. On her wrinkled leathery cheeks you could still see the tears. She had been peeling onions when Ivan, creeping softly, softly up behind her, had struck the blow. How strong he was. How strong.... Outside the snow was falling. The white snow, falling, falling.

Russian realism. And so we imitated it. Why? We don't live like the Russians, we don't think like the Russians, we don't act or react like the Russians. Why not American short stories in the American style?

England starts a vogue for the type of novel which takes its hero from the cradle to the grave, with all stops for every incident in a dull and commonplace existence. Immediately American novelists oil their typewriters, place their hero's mother in bed just in the nick of time, and start their novel half an hour before the hero enters this world, thus going the English novelist one better.

In the last two years we've groveled before our distinguished foreign visitors. We've pulled a humble forelock, bent a worshiping knee, and fumbled with the cap in our hands. We've been lectured and patronized and patted on the head and told that we're a rough lot and too fond of money, but not all bad. Possibilities. Undeveloped, but still—possibilities. We've been talked to by the French. We've been lectured

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by the English. We've acclaimed Spanish writers (practically unknown in their own country). We've kowtowed to the Italian, the Belgian, the Rumanian, the Dutch,—artists, all.

I wonder how much money James Branch Cabell would get if he were to go a-lecturing in England? Or Zona Gale, or Willa Cather, or Joseph Hergesheimer? I think that "Miss Lulu Bett" by Zona Gale is a finer book than Swinnerton's "Nocturne". It probably hadn't nearly so good a sale in America as did the Englishman's book. I think "My Antonia" by Willa Cather is a great American novel. I think the Hudson, with its palisades, is a thousand times more magnificent than the Thames. I think the Singer and the Woolworth buildings are glorious masterpieces of architecture. I think that if they, or the Bush Terminal Building, were in Paris, or Rome, or London, or Madrid, we would flock by the tens of thousands to see and study them, guide books in hand. I think American women dress better than any women in the world. I like corn on the cob better than artichokes. I think the Colonial is as fine and dignified as the Queen Anne.

It's time we stop imitating. It's time we denied this libel to the effect that we're crude, unformed, and undeveloped. Let us write in the American fashion about America. Let's paint in the American fashion from American subjects. We've got color, and romance, and glow, and vivacity, and depth all the way from Maine to Manila. Why do we imitate when we can create? Why use a substitute when the original is at hand? (That sounds like a flour ad.) There's nothing so sickening as false modesty. Perhaps when we begin to respect our own art our European fellow artists will respect it.

THE LONDONER

Printing, Ancient and Modern—Book Producing in General—Wells Coming to America—A Wells Lecture to the Highbrows—"In the Mountains"—Flecker's Collected Prose Writings—"The Blue Lagoon" on the Stage—More Studies of Modern Writers—The Two Harold Williamses—The Bolsheviks—A. E. W. Mason's Novel—A Psychological Diary of Adolescence.

LONDON, *September* 1, 1920.

THE other day I went to a most interesting exhibition, kept a secret from the general public by one of those unfortunate disabilities in the art of publicity which often mark really interesting pieces of otherwise excellent organization. This was a collection of printed books, arranged in order of date, from Caxton to the middle of the nineteenth century. The point that struck me above all others was that there had been a marked deterioration in the art of printing from the earliest days to the present. Not only were the Caxtons by far the best printed of all the books shown, but they had in addition the charm of having kept

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their looks better than the later efforts had done. The printing was better, but the paper had preserved its color, and the ink was still brilliant. The later books had suffered by the passage of time, and they were in every case inferior merely in matters of detail. It was not only that the type had less grace. The ink was poorer, the paper was bad, the arrangement of the page—all that makes for style and beauty—was slovenly and tasteless. Even the Elizabethan books were on the whole of greater beauty than the more modern ones. It was a painful sight, and a painful realization. The exhibition, of course, was quite a small one, shown at the British Museum, but for that reason it was clearly selective. Had some of the really great printing of the world been shown alongside, the spectacle would have been simply humiliating. If we had been allowed to contrast the Mazarin Bible, or some of the work of Gutenberg, with even the Caxtons, we should have shuddered for the credit of all English printing.

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Why should this be? Many very able men have given thought and attention to the making of beautiful books. What has been the result? In the main it has been negligible. Imagine the efforts, horrible enough, but essentially imitative and sophisticated, of William Morris; imagine all the small private presses which have sprung up from time to time and here and there in such great numbers; and then ask whether the art of printing has anything to say for itself in this country. It is silent. Our books come out with the tepid regulation commonness of typography and general style. Our title-pages, even, are the casual efforts of uninspired and foolish printers. Authors, publishers, printers know nothing of good taste in printing. If one leaves a printer to set in his own way he will infallibly produce an abortion, full of mixed types and silly rules and adventitious decorations; and if he is reproved he will say, in an injured tone: "I thought you wanted something nice!" Fancy any man being so besotted as to think such things can be described by such a word! One has only to look at the majority of the books that turn up in bookshops new and old to observe that printers have been busy obeying their great law of ugliness in perfect serenity ever since printing was invented.

It is quite true that what they have to print is often enough trivial, and I agree that for trivial or undistinguished literature trivial and uninteresting printing is the only form. But what of the good books, and the great books? They are multiplied in thousands, in the most hideous styles imaginable. The shape of the type page, the margins of the page, the color and substance of the paper, all these things, so essential to the really beautiful book, are ignored. And the result is a beastly mess. I wonder if my readers know how much depends on the color of the ink in which a book is printed? Do they realize that it can easily be too black, or too grey? That as the paper is made so the effect of the type may be spoiled or enhanced? That as the type is placed upon the page it can be exactly in proportion or out of it? To the amateur all books appear much alike, of course. Most people would commend recklessly a heavy plate paper, with jet black printing and half-tone illustrations. "This", they will say, "is a HANDSOME book!" And the poor fools will go to their graves knowing no better. But we who can tell, are we not criminal in our neglect of what might give rare edification to others who can

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appreciate the good and the beautiful? It seems to me that we are very guilty in our tolerance of bad type, bad ink, bad margins, bad machining, bad paper, and bad taste. Until we bestir ourselves, and realize that beauty is neither ornament nor mediocrity, we shall have ugly unappetizing books which are eyesores to all who know better. We shall be sinning against taste. And we shall either debauch the taste of future generations, or earn their execrations.

In July of the first year of the war —1914—I went to Leipsic to see the great Book Fair which was then held (by the way, English publishers are just beginning to recover their exhibits at that Fair), and the British Museum show simply confirms what I then felt. When I saw the solid, respectable English books, all turned out in a way to make angels weep and grocers satisfied with value for their money in an unusual purchase, I felt a subtle shame. I thought: "If only the people who 'make' these books could see that, at any rate, there are other ways of making books, how excellent it would be!" But they had no chance, for the war came, and we were cut off from even our own exhibits. There were on the shelves the stiffly bound lumps of dulness, with plain gilt lettering on the back, or florid gilt lettering on the side,—sober, respectable, futile, desperately ugly. If one looked inside, there was exactly the same tale to be told. Respectability, conscientious solid wretched successions of grey dreary-looking pages. Not a touch of inspiration. Not one easy capture of the right thing. Tortured attempts to be original by means of super-ugliness there certainly were; but of what use was that? The trail of the English book-producing spirit was over all. All were dull and sterile. There were no ideas, there was no taste. And there never will be any taste until we call off the amateurs and bring expert knowledge to the making of books, combined with the art of the genuine craftsman. We have had enough of hack-printers and private presses which distort ugliness in order to make spurious originality. Their day should be closed. It has lasted for four hundred years. They grow worse with each decade.

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By January next H. G. Wells will be in New York. He is off immediately to Russia, taking with him the elder of his two boys, who has learned a good deal of Russian in the last two or three years. G. P. ("Gip") Wells has had quite an experience of foreign travel with his father this year, because he went with him to Prague in the early summer, and saw things on the railway journey such as he had never before seen. In fact he saw one lady who refused to occupy her sleeping berth on one of the trains, on the ground that she would not share it with the friendly little creatures which visibly crawled upon her proposed pillow. This is by the way. One need not travel far to make the acquaintance of such traveling companions; and as Wells will in all probability be treated throughout Russia (where, in common with W. J. Locke, he has long enjoyed a great but—as there is no copyright convention with Russia—unremunerative popularity) with great consideration, the trains will very likely be quite clean. This, of course, is not the case in southeastern Europe, where everything is in a terrible state of filth. In fact one traveler, recently returned from the Caucasus, Turkey, Serbia, and so on, was describing his various lodgings to me. He said of one: "That wasn't so bad. There were only bugs." I hardly think that Wells will be accompanied to the

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States by his son. He is coming for strenuous work, and will lecture.

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I have only once heard Wells lecture. It was at the Times Book Club years ago and I sat just behind Bernard Shaw and various other notabilities. Wells appeared, a little plump man, at the far end of a long room, and began to talk apparently to himself. A window was open just behind him, and his voice must have floated out of it. He made certain deprecating remarks about his own lecturing manner, how he held his head down and did several other things which he should not have done; but when he began actually to read from his papers he was heard breathlessly by a packed and uncomfortable audience. His remarks, reprinted in "An Englishman Looks at the World", were staggering to many people present; but they were beautifully stimulating to the unbiased hearer. For one thing they were original, because whatever Wells does or says he is never anything or anybody but himself. And for another thing Wells is one of those men who can never be anything but stimulating. Men become almost as frantic about him as they do about Shaw. They rage and snort. And Wells rather enjoys their raging and snorting, which makes them rage and snort all the more. I tried to find out what were to be the subjects of his lectures; but he would not say. He is bound to have all sorts of things to talk about, for he has seen so much of vital interest to civilization during the past few months, and his vivid, eager mind takes the cream of all he sees and forms it into highly provocative generalizations and propositions which should make his material for any number of lectures practically inexhaustible. It is years since he was in America, but I hope he will have a big success this time, because he is one of the very few really great personal forces in modern life and thought.

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There is a good deal of excitement here over the authorship of an anonymous book called "In the Mountains". Those who have read the book have no doubt whatever about the authorship, and it will be interesting to see how long it remains a secret. Most of the reviews make no bones about the ascription, although they respect the author's anonymity. She continues steadfastly to deny that she has written any such book, but her denial must not be taken too seriously in face of the extraordinary exactness of some of the descriptions. The book describes life and a social comedy taking place in a Swiss chalet about 5,000 feet above sea level; and it is not for the first time that the author uses a little blur of secrecy to disguise the fact that she has written out of the fulness of her own delightful wit and brilliance. I wonder what one is to do with such a novelist, and in fact with all such anonymous writers. Few readers of the book will have much doubt about a piquant style so familiar. They will all say that only one pen could be responsible for descriptions so charming and observation so pointed and so marked with delicious malice.

Several very interesting books appear in the new list of Messrs. George Bell and Sons. This is no doubt owing to the new policy of this old-established firm. In days gone by Bells were known chiefly as the publishers of the never-to-be-forgotten Bohn's Libraries. Then came a phase when they issued a number of books on social subjects. Now, when they are said to have the advice of two of our young poets and litterateurs, they show a natural tendency in the direction of

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belles-lettres, and the names of Maurice Hewlett, Robert Lynd, and Vachel Lindsay figure prominently in the list. Above all, there is to be a volume of the "Collected Prose of James Elroy Flecker". Flecker is one of the modern writers (he died early in the war) who has most rapidly reached the position of a modern classic. He had a great gift. To my mind he is incomparably the best of the modern poets, and some of the more familiar of his poems are becoming almost too familiar. His prose, which is less well-known, should be of enormous interest. He had a ripe and a curious mind. His "Collected Poems", published two or three years ago by Secker, sells continuously. A play which he wrote is also promised for early production by the singular company which is headed by Basil Dean. The play, "Hassan", is to have a musical setting, or at least it is to have music specially composed for it. Mr. Dean has written to the papers saying that in accordance with plan the music is to be the work of an English composer. I forget who the composer is, but anything less typically English than Flecker's work it would be hard to imagine. The ideal composer for the piece, I should have thought, would have been one of the modern Frenchmen — post-Debussy. However, we shall see. A feature of the recent production of "The Blue Lagoon" by the Reandean Company was the music of Clive Carey.

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Anything more naive than this play, adapted from the novel by de Vere Stacpoole, I have never seen. It made me subside into coarse chucklings. One or two of the scenic effects were certainly, in the way of the imitation of nature, extremely good. There was a small boat on the open sea which was splendidly handled. A tropic storm was also to be noted. But these were all efforts in the direction of mimicking nature, and the real thing (in the case of the boat at sea) may be seen any day off the coast of any seaside resort in the British Isles. All that is wonderful about it is that it should be transported to the stage. It was in the pure Drury Lane tradition. What was so amusing to a prurient mind such as my own was the candid pursuit of the procreative function through three scenes, where we saw first the awakening of the sex instinct, then the barely ex post facto embrace of the lovers, and a little later the manifest consequence of the other scenes, in which a small wooden doll was hurried in a shawl across the stage. The process had been completed in a storm. Strange writhings of poison, passion, and fear were contributed by three different actors. It was clear that the power of the human body to express emotion without speech is limited, since in each case the gestures of the suffering person were similar, and the culminating struggle of each was the erection of the middle of the body into the similitude of a croquet hoop. It reminded me of the storks in "Alice in Wonderland".

* * * *

I see with dread that Messrs. Sidgwick and Jackson announce a new book by Harold Williams called "Modern English Writers, 1890-1914". The author recently issued a comparable book called "Outlines of Modern English Literature, 1890-1914", and of this there is to be a new edition shortly. It is therefore evident that people read such books with some avidity; but why they should want to read books about modern writers when they cannot have read the books written by those writers, I cannot conceive. What is the value of such pemmicanized

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reading? It gives us readymade opinions, of course, and "the number of people who will be at the pains of thinking for themselves is small", as the critic in an old play said. All the same, there must be a good deal of repetition in the material for such books, as they can only be expositions and revaluations of the authors already dealt with in similar works. So one would have thought that the first book on the market would have collared all the readers and left all its successors high and dry. This is evidently not so, and as Mr. Williams is a very careful and painstaking analyst I am sure that if such a book does break new ground at all, he will make it into a serious contribution to modern literary criticism.

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Mr. Williams is, of course, not the Harold Williams who writes about Russia with such authority. The Russian Harold Williams has not written a book for some years. He has been too busy in the heart of actual events. He has been right into the fighting in South Russia, has struggled across Europe with a passport which is a farcical mass of visas, has been forced to rest awhile in France, and is now back in England collecting the threads of his normal existence. His wife is a Russian woman, and they lived until the Bolsheviks came in the heart of Petrograd. Here Williams represented the "Daily Chronicle", and his letters were on all hands recognized as sterling work. Unfortunately he was early marked down for attention by the Bolsheviks, owing to his wife's position; and the life of this family during the rest of the turbulence has been more like a wild romance than anything I have heard of elsewhere. A stepson of Harold Williams had a miraculous escape through Finland, while a stepdaughter has had the narrowest of escapes in South Russia. She had been suffering from typhoid, caught while nursing the troops, and the Bolsheviks appeared. She was saved by a Guards officer with admirable promptitude, hurried to the river in a car at the head of whose driver a revolver was all the time held, taken by her rescuer to Constantinople, then to Salonika, and finally to Serbia. Here she became engaged to her deliverer, and has since married him. All this, for a young woman of under twenty-five, is not bad going even in these times.

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Talking about Bolsheviks reminds me that by a misfortune there are to be two translations of the famous Bolshevik poem "12", by Alexander Blok. It is certainly a remarkable work, but whether there is room for two translations I should be disposed to doubt. We shall see. It is, of course, pro-Bolshevik; but by curious ill-luck for its propagandist effectiveness it might be read (particularly in view of its obscurities) as anti-Bolshevik. So that both pros and antis ought to be well satisfied with the work as it stands. One translation that is promised is to be unillustrated; the other is to contain some strange drawings by Larionov, a modern Russian artist at present in Paris.

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Some months ago I mentioned that A. E. W. Mason had had some most exciting times during the war in the course of his secret service work in Mexico, and I expressed the hope that he would write an account of his doings and their significance. His work was all of the most thrilling kind, and he seemed to have shown almost superhuman sagacity in dealing with the machinations of the Germans in Mexico. His narrative of even a few of the things was one of the most

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breathlessly exciting things I have ever heard. Well, now, from a meagre publisher's note on his forthcoming novel, "The Summons", I seem to glimpse the fact that instead of writing his own story he has, with the natural impulse of the novelist, turned it to account for the purposes of fictional narrative. The book should be a very "live" one, because it is bound to be based upon authentic happenings. In some ways I would rather have had a true book; but it is ill quarreling with gift horses, and we must be content with what is presumably the only form in which much of the matter could be utilized. What makes entertaining viva voce adventurous stuff is not always shown to the best advantage when it is set out in print. And if the novel, under the guise of a coherent story, tells all that I heard, or even a part of it, we shall have a tale better than most of the other novels of Mason, thrilling as many of these have been. He is a born raconteur, and his personal zest is a good thing in the art of fiction-telling.

* * * *

George Allen and Unwin are going to publish what promises to be one of the most sensational documents ever seen, surpassing even "The Story of Opal". This is a translation, by Eden and Cedar Paul, of the true diary of a young Austrian girl. I have not seen the book myself, but I expect it will be issued this year, and it is one of the books for which I am quite genuinely waiting. Although in no sense pornographic, it is a picture of much that I am afraid will be taken as stimulant by those to whom the pornographic is the breath of life. The young Austrian girl tells in the diary all her thoughts upon the subject of sex, and depicts her various emotions in the face of all sorts of strange happenings and misinterpretations. Judging from what I have heard, she has produced what is essentially a work for the scientist engaged on that difficult study, the adolescent mind. It may well be a key to much that is at present baffling in the Freudian theories. I do not mean that it has anything to do with the "suppressed wish", but that few young people put on record their true thoughts about life, and even if it should prove to be neurotic in some of its illuminations the book will still be invaluable as an indication of what one girl has thought. We forget our own mystifications, and when we come to middle life we are so sophisticated and so sentimental about the thoughts of the young and their meaning in the mental complex, that we tend to pooh pooh the sexual preoccupations of the young, or to exaggerate them into an obsession. Thus we make them either the subject of uneasy suppressions and glossings over, or we go to the other extreme, and elaborate them into an insufficient theory to account for the prolongation of our own species. The world, I am convinced, is more normal than we sometimes think it, and at the same time much less rosy and free from innocence than we try to believe when we look at the simple faces of our offspring, or the offspring of others. There is much going on beneath the surface. This book will show us some of what is there, and if we are not too avid of such things we may learn a great deal of what is hidden by convention, besides righting the balance between what is and what only seems to be true concerning the heart of the young girl who has to grope after knowledge of difficult subjects because of the secrecy of her over-discreet parents.

SIMON PURE

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THE BATTLE OF MANILA ENVELOPES

BY CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

MR. BIRDLIP was a good old man, of unimpeachable simplicity. He had achieved enormous wealth in an honorable business, and then found (to his mild distress) that the great traffic he had built up conducted itself automatically. He had, in a way, been gently shouldered out of his own nest by the capable men whose fortunes he had made. But his zealous and frugal spirit required some sort of problem to feed upon, and he delighted his heart by owning a newspaper. "The Evening Lens" was his toy and the child of his dotage.

So the Persian rugs and walnut paneling of his private suite in the huge Birdlip Building saw him rarely. He was supremely happy in the dingy sanctum at the back of the old "Lens" office, where the hum of the presses and the racket of the city room (which he still, by an innocent misunderstanding, called the "sitting room") delighted his guileless heart. He would sit turning over the pages of each edition as it came upstairs (putting his second finger up to his tongue before he turned each leaf) and poring industriously over the market reports, the comics, and the Woman's Page. With his pink cheeks, his dapper little figure in a brown suit and cream-colored waistcoat, and his eager, shy, chirping manner, he was very like a robin. Although he was full of gigantic schemes, which he broached naively in the editorial council every now and then, he never wittingly interfered with his editor-in-chief, in whom he had full confidence. But his gentle and jejune mind had a disastrous effect on the paper no less. Almost unconsciously the "Lens" was written and edited down to his standard, as a roomful of adults will amiably prattle so as to carry along a child in the conversation.

Mr. Birdlip's amazing success in his original field had been due partly to his decent sagacity, honesty, and persistence, and partly to his sheer fortune in finding (at the very outset of his enterprise) several men of rugged ability, who became the pearls in his simple oyster-shell. As a result of this, it had become his fixed mental habit to believe that somewhere, some day, he would encounter the man or men who would make the "Lens" the greatest newspaper in the country. This, indeed, was his candid ambition, and he never went anywhere without keeping his eyes open for the anticipated messiah.

He was greatly taken by broad primitive effects: when he noticed that a Chicago daily always called itself "The World's Greatest Newspaper" he was marvelously struck by the power of this slogan, and lamented that he had not thought of it

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first. The question as to whether the slogan were true or not never occurred to him. He liked to have the keynote sentences in the leading editorial emphasized in blackface type, so that there might be no danger of anyone's missing the point. Desiring for his beloved sheet "this man's art and that man's scope", as the sonnet puts it, every now and then he thought he had discovered the prodigy, and some new feature would be added to the paper at outrageous expense, only to be quietly shoveled out six months or a year later. In the meantime the auditor was growing very gray, and even Mr. Birdlip's quick blue eye was sometimes hazed with faint perplexity when he studied the circulation charts. Perhaps it would have been kinder if someone could have told him that a boyhood spent in splitting infinitives is not sufficient training for one to become an Abraham Lincoln of the newspaper business.

As he trotted in and out of the "Lens" office, with his rosy air of confidence and his disarming simplicity (which made his white hair seem a wanton cruelty on the part of Time, that would wither a man's cells while his mind was still on all fours), Mr. Birdlip was the object of furtive but very sharp study on the part of some cynical journalists whom he hired. It was a genuine amazement to Sanford, the dramatic critic, that the owner was so entirely unaware of his (Sanford's) abilities, which certainly (he thought) called for a salary of more than sixty dollars a week. Sanford often meditated about this, and not entirely in secret. In fact it was generally admitted among the younger members of the staff, when they gathered at Ventriloquo's for lunch, that the Old Man was immaculately ignorant of all phases of the newspaper business. While the spaghetti and mushrooms cheered the embittered gossips, merry and quaint were the quips sped toward the unsuspecting target. Sanford's private grievance was that though for over a year he had been doing signed critiques of plays, which were really spirited and honest, not once had the Old Man condescended to mention them, or to show any sign of uttering an *Ecce Homo* in his direction. As far as he was concerned, he felt that the weekly battle of Manila Envelopes was a conspicuous rout, and he frequently rehearsed the exact tone in which he would some day say to the managing editor, "You may fire when ready, Gridley." Little did Sanford realize that the only time Mr. Birdlip had attempted to read the "Exits and Entrances" column he had met the name of Æschylus, had faltered, and retreated upon the syndicated Walt Mason poem.

"I saw 'Ruddigore' the other evening," said Sanford to his cronies, as they called for a second round of coffee. "There's a line in it that describes old Birdie fore, aft, and amidships. Something like this: he is that particular variety of good old man to whom the truth is always a refreshing novelty."

They complauded. Rightly or wrongly, these high-spirited and sophisticated young men had decided that Mr. Birdlip's naïveté was so refreshingly complete that it gave them an æsthetic pleasure to contemplate it. It had the exquisite beauty of any absolute perfection. Their employer's latest venture, which had been to pay $200,000 for the exclusive right to publish and syndicate the mysterious formulæ of a leading Memory Course, had shocked them very greatly. It touched them in a tender spot to know that there

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had been all that money lying round the office, unused, which was now to be squandered (as they put it) on charlatanry, when they felt that they might just as well have had some of it.

"The Old Man is always looking for some special stunt, and trying to discover someone on the outside," said one. "He can't see the material right under his nose."

"It's really rather pathetic: he's crazy to get out a great newspaper, but he hasn't the faintest idea how to do it."

"Yes, give him credit for sincerity. It isn't just circulation he wants."

"Circulation's easy enough, if that's what you're after. The three builders of circulation are Sordid, Sensational, and Sex—"

"And the greatest of these is Sex."

"Oh, he's decent enough. He won't pander."

"He panders to stupidity. He's fallen for this Memory bunk. And when he finds that's a flivver, he'll try *something else, equally fatuous.* He's making the old 'Lens' ridiculous."

They smoked a while meditatively.

"What I would like to figure out", said Sanford, "is some way of making an impression on the old man. I've got to get more money. The troublesome part of it is, I feel instinctively that he and I live in different worlds. We hardly even talk the same language. Well, there's no chance of his learning my way of thinking; so I suppose I'll have to learn his."

"He's the man who puts the nil in the Manila Envelope," said one of the others.

"As far as we are concerned, yes. But there's plenty of the stuff going round on Fridays for the kind of people he understands."

"He seems to be an absent-minded old bird. When I talk to him, it's as though I were trying to speak through a fog."

"It looks to me as though his mind had overstayed its leave of absence."

"He likes the kind of men who, as he says, 'have both feet on the ground'."

"Yes, but you've got to have at least one foot in the air if you're going to get anywhere."

"See here," said the literary editor, who was more tolerant than the others. "What's the use of panning the old man? He's trying to put the paper over, just as hard as we are. Maybe harder. But he doesn't know. And I believe he knows he doesn't know. I think the chief trouble is, they all knuckle down to him so. They're scared of him. They think the only way they can hold their jobs is by agreeing with him. If someone could only put him wise—"

"But how *can* you put him wise? He doesn't see anything unless it's laid out for him in a strip cartoon or a full page ad. The kind of thing that interests him is the talk he hears in a Pullman smoker or club car."

"That's a fact. You know he always says he likes to go traveling, because he picks up ideas from people on the train. 'Of course I place you! Mr. Mowbray Monk of Seattle. And is your Rotary Club still rotating?' That kind of talk."

"I think you're right," said Sanford. "He doesn't see us because we have too much protective coloring. We are only the patient drudges. We don't talk that Pullman palaver about Big Business. We've got to learn to talk his language. What is that phrase of Bacon's—we've got to bring ourselves to his business and bosom—"

"Let's get back to the office," said the disillusioned literary editor.

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"That's the way to bring home the bacon."

A few days later Sanford was at his desk, clipping and pasting press agents' flimsies for the Saturday Theatre Page. This was a task which he hated above all others, and he was meditating sourly on the scarcity of truth in human affairs. At this moment Mr. Birdlip happened to pass along the corridor outside the editorial rooms. Sanford heard him say:

"Miss Flaccus, will you get me a seat in the club car, ten o'clock train tomorrow? I've got to run over to New York to take lunch with Mr. Montaigne."

Sanford put down his shears, relit his pipe, and began to pursue a fugitive idea round the suburbs of his mind. Presently he drew out his check book from a drawer and did some calculating on a sheet of paper. "A hundred dollars," he said to himself. "I guess it's worth it."

The following morning, dressed in a new suit and with shoes freshly burnished, Sanford was at the terminal twenty minutes before train time. With him was a young man carrying a leather portfolio. To observe the respectful demeanor of this young man, no one would have suspected that he was Sanford's young brother-in-law, rejoicing in cutting his classes at college for a day's masquerading. Sanford bought some cigars (a form of smoking which he detested) and carefully removed the bands from all but one of them.

Presently Mr. Birdlip appeared, cheerfully trotting up the stairs. Sanford and his companion followed discreetly. As Mr. Birdlip went through the gate, they were close behind. Entering the club car, Mr. Birdlip sat down and opened a morning paper. Sanford and his companion were prompt to take the two adjoining seats. Sanford began to look over "System" and "Printers' Ink", and perhaps his interest in these vigorous journals was not wholly unfeigned, for it was the first time he had studied them. The young man beside him drew out a mass of papers from his leather bag, and in a moment of stillness just before the train started said in a clear voice:

"Pardon, sir, but there is some important dictation here that ought to be attended to."

Sanford assumed the air of a man wearied with tremendous affairs.

"Very well, what comes first?"

"The New York 'Budget' has wired for an answer in regard to their proposition."

Sanford blew a luxurious whiff of smoke.

"Take this letter. My dear Mr. Ralston: Replying to your inquiries as to whether I would be willing to take charge of the editorial page of the 'Budget' for a few months, to put the paper on its feet, I am willing to consider the matter, and would be pleased to discuss it with you if you will run over to see me. I am very busy just now, and could not possibly undertake the work for some weeks. I have been retained in an advisory capacity by a big western syndicate which was badly in need of some circulation-building; and until I can put their paper up to a half-million figure I have not much spare time. Their paper has gone up a couple of hundred thousand since I mapped out a campaign for them, but I would not feel justified in discontinuing my services to them until these gains are properly consolidated. I will be in my office at ten o'clock next Tuesday morning if you care to see me. Very truly yours."

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Mr. Birdlip was hidden behind his paper, but something in the angle at which the sheets were held led Sanford to believe that the old gentleman was listening.

"Very well, Edwards," he said. "What's next?"

"Here's this letter from Lord Southpeak of the London 'Gazette' asking if he can see you when he comes over next month."

"Cable Southpeak I shall be very happy to see him if he gets here before the fifteenth. I am going on my vacation then."

The attentive Edwards scribbled rapidly in his note-book.

"Just pick out the most urgent stuff," said Sanford. "I don't care to bother with anything that isn't really pressing. I've got an important conference on in New York today, and I want to keep my mind clear. Blackwit of the Associated Press has asked me to say a few words to his directors on Journalism as a Function of Public Conscience."

Edwards ran rapidly through an imposing mass of documents.

"That long distance call from the Chicago 'Vox'," he said. "You promised to give Mr. Groton some word this morning."

"Call him up when we get to Penn. Station," said Sanford. "Tell him I can't give him any decision yet awhile. Tell him that loyalty to my own city will keep me there for some time. You might tell him that I believe the 'Lens' has great possibilities if properly handled. I should not care to build up the property of a Chicago paper while there is a chance of the 'Lens' becoming the great evening paper of the East."

"Yes, sir," said Edwards, jotting down what might pass for stenography.

The train was running smoothly through level green country, and Mr. Birdlip laid down his paper on his lap. Sanford was ready to catch his eye.

"Good morning, Mr. Birdlip," he said genially.

"Good morning," said the owner of the "Lens", whose bright gaze exhibited a lively tincture of interest.

"Here are the typed notes of your remarks on Newspaper Circulation as a Byproduct of the Multiplication Table," said Edwards, in a loud voice.

"You can let those wait," said Sanford carelessly. "I don't want to be bothered with anything else this morning. Give me a memorandum of anything that needs to be attended to when we get to New York." He turned to Mr. Birdlip. "I find that in these busy days one has to attend to some of one's work even on the train. It is about the only place where one is never interrupted."

"Did I hear you say something about circulation?" said Mr. Birdlip. "Are you specially interested in that problem?"

"I have given it a good deal of thought," said Sanford. "But I would hardly dignify it by calling it a problem. It is perfectly simple. It is purely a matter of taking the right attitude toward it. So many newspaper proprietors regard it merely as a problem in addition. Now it should be considered rather as a matter of multiplication. Instead of trying to add ten to your figures, why not multiply by ten? The result is so much more satisfactory."

This sounded so plausible that Mr. Birdlip felt ashamed to ask how it was to be done.

"Will you have a cigar, sir?" asked Sanford, handing out the only one with a band on it. Mr. Birdlip accepted it, and looked as though he

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were about to ask a question. Sanford went on rapidly.

"Speaking of circulation," he said, "when I am consulted I am always surprised to note that newspaper proprietors are so prone to view the matter merely as a question of distribution; of—well, of merchandising," he added, as his eye fell upon that word in his copy of "System". "Indeed it rests upon quite another basis. The essence of merchandising" (he repeated the word with relish, noting its soothing effect on his employer) "is what?"

He made a dramatic pause, and Mr. Birdlip, carried away, wondered what indeed was the essence.

"The essence of merchandising," said Sanford (he smote the arm of his chair, and leaned forward in emphasis) "and by merchandising I mean of course in the modern sense, merchandising on a big scale, is nothing but Confidence. Confidence, an impalpable thing, a state of mind. Now sir, what is it that upbuilds circulation? It is Public Confidence. The assurance on the part of the public that the newspaper is reliable. It is a secret and inviolable conviction on the part of the reader that the integrity and enterprise of the paper are beyond cavil, in other words, unimpeachable. In order to create the Will-to-Purchase on the part of the prospect, in order to beget that desirable state of mind, there must be a state of mind in the paper itself. Note that word *Mind*. Now what is the Mind of the paper? I always ask every newspaper owner who consults me, what is the Mind of his paper?"

Without waiting for Mr. Birdlip to be embarrassed by his inability to answer this question, the ecstatic Sanford continued:

"The Mind of the paper is, of course, the Editorial Department. How subtle, how delicate, how momentous, is that function of commenting on the great affairs of the world! As I said in an address to a Rotary club recently, of what use to have all the mechanical perfections ever invented unless your editors are the right men? Walter Whitman, the efficiency engineer, said: "Produce great persons: the rest follows." That is the kind of production that counts most. Get great personalities for your editors, and watch the circulation rise. Of course the right kind of editors must be very highly paid."

This was a strange doctrine to Mr. Birdlip, who never read the editorial page of his own paper, and secretly wondered how the editors found so much to write about.

"The great error that so many newspaper owners make," said Sanford sonorously, "is to think of their product as they would of any other article of commerce which is turned out day by day, in standardized units, from a factory. A newspaper is not standardized. It is born anew every issue. It is not a manufacturing routine that puts it together; it is a human organism, built up out of human brains. Every unit is different. It depends not primarily on machinery but on human personalities. I cannot understand why it is that newspaper owners yearn for the finest and most modern presses, and yet are often content to staff their journals with second-rate men."

"I agree with you," said Mr. Birdlip. "It is all a question of getting the right man. That is one reason why I am so fond of traveling; I always meet up with new ideas. Now, sir (I am sorry I do not know your name, for your face is rather familiar; I think I must have met you at some

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Rotary club), you seem to me a man of forceful and aggressive character. You are the kind of man I should like to have on the 'Lens'. I heard you mention the paper to your secretary a while back; you must be interested in it."

Sanford was perfectly cool. "I might consider it," he said.

"I think you would find the 'Lens' a pleasant paper to work on," said Mr. Birdlip. "I flatter myself that the staff is a capable one, for the most part."

"I should insist on being given a free hand," said Sanford. "Perhaps the position of circulation manager —?"

"Let me think a moment," said Mr. Birdlip. "I suppose I ought to visit with my editor-in-chief before firing anyone to make room for you. But I must say I like the way you talk, straight from the shoulder, like that Dr. Cranium, you know. That's the sort of stuff we need."

"Right!" cried Sanford. "If you always talk straight from the shoulder, you'll never talk through your hat."

Mr. Birdlip relished this impromptu aphorism. "Well, now, let me see," he said, pondering. "The editor-in-chief, the managing editor, the editorial writers—they're all pretty good men —"

"Of course I shouldn't care for a merely routine position," said Sanford. "The only position I would consider would be one in which I could really build up circulation for you." He was wondering inwardly whether to stand out for a ten thousand salary.

"Quite so," said Mr. Birdlip. "I think I have it. How would you care to run a column? 'Straight From the Shoulder'—wouldn't that be a fine title?"

"Fine!" said Sanford, but not without a secret shudder. Still, he thought, gold can assuage anything; and he reflected on the rich, sedentary, and carefree life of a syndicated philosopher.

"Very well," said the owner. "I've been looking around for a man with both feet on the ground—"

(Both feet on the pay envelope is my idea, said Sanford to himself.)

"And I think you're just the man I want. There's only one place in the paper I can think of that really needs a change. There's a fellow on the staff called Sanford, runs a kind of column, terrible stuff. I don't think he amounts to much. Now why couldn't you take his job?"

Sanford has never forgiven his brother-in-law for that curious strangled sound he emitted.

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CENSORSHIP

BY GEORGE HAVEN PUTNAM

ONE of the characteristics which distinguish the genus man from his fellow animals is the capacity he has shown for developing power of expression and for the evolution of new methods for making his thought known to his fellow men.

Pari passu with the growth of expression and with the increase in the influence of thought and of the interaction of ideas, there came into existence at a certain period in the history of humanity a desire on the part of some members of the community to restrict expression and to supervise and control the utterances of their fellows; and when these arbitrary persons were able to secure the necessary power, a supervision was established under which could be prohibited all expressions of opinion that were not in accord with the views of the person in authority. With the growth of the individual who wanted to state his case, came the development of the other individual who assumed the authority to say *streng verboten.* This was the beginning of censorship, political, religious, or social.

An example of the exercise of such censorship in the classic period is given in the trial of Socrates, 400 B. C. The Athenian philosopher was condemned for the utterance of doctrines that, as the censor claimed, were likely to prove pernicious for the morals of the citizens and dangerous for the welfare of the state. During the succeeding centuries, censorship was exercised from time to time by the political authorities with the view of restricting the circulation and the influence of opinion that might possibly impugn the wisdom and thereby weaken the authority of the rulers.

For political censorship, however, the purpose of which was to protect the ruler, or the existing government, from assault or criticism, there could be no fixed principles or accepted system. Each government undertook to repress what at the time seemed to its members to be dangerous, and the utterances selected for repression varied, of necessity, with successive rulers and with changing conditions. In 1555, for instance, Queen Mary of England prohibited, under strict penalties, the printing and circulation of books by Protestant writers; while in 1559 Queen Elizabeth, with equal partiality, instituted a similar prohibition against the books coming from Catholics. These acts of censorship being based upon the creeds of the two groups of writers were, in form at least, religious; but in each case the books were condemned not on the ground of heresy but because they constituted, as claimed, an attack on the existing order, on government itself, and tended, therefore, to "subvert the

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peace of the realm". This charge could fairly be made against one at least of the books complained of by Elizabeth, which contained the edict of excommunication issued against her by Pope Pius V, with the accompanying recommendation that the Queen should be assassinated as a heretic.

From the very long series of examples of censorship by the state, I may cite one or two that are more or less typical. Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason" was condemned, under the royal authority of Prussia, in the following terms:

> Our sacred person you have, with your so-called philosophy, attempted to bring into contempt....and you have at the same time assailed the truth of Scripture and the foundations of the Creed.... *(mich und Gott)*. We order that henceforth you shall employ your talents to better purpose, and that you shall keep silence on matters which are outside your proper functions.

In 1832, Heine, who had just secured with a Berlin publisher a satisfactory contract for the issue of a collected edition of his works, was prohibited, under an order from King Frederick William, from printing or selling any of his writings within the Prussian dominions. This prohibition covered not only the books heretofore published but any works that Heine might thereafter produce.

Shortly after the invention of printing, about 1450, the printer-publishers began the practice of securing from the rulers of their respective states "privileges" which gave to the publishers, in form at least, a control or monopoly of the book in question for a term of years, usually fifteen. These privileges constituted the "protection" or encouragement for production given to the printers and to their authors until the beginning of copyright law with the enactment, in 1709, of the statute of Queen Anne. It was a natural condition of the granting of a privilege that the work so protected should, in its purpose and execution, have secured the approval of the state authorities, and this necessitated the institution of official examiners and brought about the development of censorship by the state. As before pointed out, however, this political censorship was, of necessity, very variable in character and in application. It rested upon no system or fixed principles, and its haphazard character often worked serious injustice for both authors and publishers.

A more systematic, and, on various grounds, a more defensible, system of censorship had in the meantime grown up under the authority of the Church. The Church censorship may be said to have begun under the influence of St. Paul, when the converts to Christianity cast into the flames their books of magic (Acts xix, 19); but the first prohibition of literature carrying the authority of the Church was issued in 494 by Pope Gelasius I. From that date, the Church may be said to have taken upon itself the responsibility of guarding the souls of the faithful against the pernicious influence of heretical literature. To this end, the Church authorities issued from time to time lists of books that were classed as heretical, and the reading of which by the faithful was, under severe penalties, prohibited. Upon the writers and printers of such books, the condemnation was much more serious, sometimes reaching to excommunication.

The more formal and more comprehensive of these lists of prohibited books came to be known as indexes. The series of indexes compiled under the authority of the Church, and in part under the direct supervision of the popes, comprises in all fifty-three. This series begins in 1526 with the index prepared in London by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and closes with

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the really scholarly index published in Rome by Leo XIII in 1900. It seems probable that Leo's work will finally bring to a close the series of indexes. The literature of the world, and even that portion of the literature to be classed as heretical, has grown to such proportions that it can no longer be listed and characterized in any one index.

It was three-fourths of a century after Gutenberg, when the leaders of the Reformation were utilizing the printing presses of Wittenberg for the spread of the Protestant heresies, that the ecclesiastics became aroused to the perils that the new art was bringing upon the true faith and upon the authority of the Church. To the devout adherents of the Church of Rome, and particularly to those to whom had been given the responsibility for the government of the Church and for the spiritual guidance of its members, the situation, not only during the early years of fierce strife against the Protestant heresies, but throughout the succeeding centuries, presented the gravest difficulties. There is something almost pathetic in the long series of attempts made by popes, councils, bishops, congregations, and inquisitors to protect the souls of the faithful against the baneful influence of the ever-increasing tide of literature that was being poured forth from the various publishing centres, and so much of which was calculated to lead men astray from the true doctrines and to bring them into risk of everlasting perdition.

To ecclesiastical rulers, honestly holding such convictions, there was, of course, but one duty. They must use every means in their power to suppress the heresies, and to warn and protect their flocks. What were the fortunes or even the lives of a few evil-minded or devil-inspired printers and writers as compared with the eternal hopes of the great mass of men? Nay! It was better that the misguided readers themselves should, by prompt and, if necessary, extreme penalties, lose all that they had in this world, rather than that they should be permitted — in continuing to absorb heresy and in spreading its leprosy abroad—not only to sacrifice their own souls but also to undermine the faith of their fellow men.

The action of the Church was, therefore, not only logical and reasonable; it was the only course that was possible for an organization to which, as its rulers undoubtedly believed, the Almighty had confided the care of the spiritual welfare of mankind. The safety of the soul depended upon the nature of the intellectual sustenance taken in, whether through the ears or through the eyes. All literature or instruction in any form—spoken, written, or printed—must, therefore, before reaching the understanding, be sifted under the control of an all-wise and infallible Church. The believer must be protected against harm. The doubter must be recalled to the true path and the heresies and the heretics must alike be exterminated.

The purpose and general policy of the Church in regard to its responsibility for guiding the reading of the faithful, have not altered since the issue of the first of the Church's indexes, published in Louvain in 1546; but since the publication in 1900 of the Index of Leo XIII, the Church authorities, and more particularly the directors of the Congregation of the Index, appear to have decided that the mass of literature produced throughout the world had become too considerable to be analyzed or classified in any such document as an index. It seems probable therefore that Leo's index will be the final attempt of the

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Church to place before its members a general statement in regard to the classification of literature with a specification of the books that are unsafe for the reading of a believer. I understand that the general principles for the selection of proper reading matter and for protection against heretical literature are, however, still being emphasized by the confessors, under the general instructions of the bishops, to the faithful who are prepared in this matter to be guided by the authority of the Church.

The political authorities have, of course, found themselves confronted with a difficulty similar to that which has caused the Church to give up the publication of its index. The rulers of any community may well feel a measure of responsibility in regard to the protection of the citizens under their charge, and particularly of the less intelligent of these citizens, against literature which is likely to be injurious to their morals and to instigate them to conduct undesirable in itself and likely to prove detrimental to the welfare of the community. The state authorities have from time to time attempted to make specifications of literature classed as *contra bonos mores* and to prohibit the publication or distribution of such literature.

The rulers who claimed authority over their people by virtue of "Divine right", assumed also the authority to prevent the publication of literature which incited the citizens against the existing order. If the king or the kaiser held the conviction that his authority to rule the people had been placed in his hands by the Divine Power, his action was logical in considering that any attempt to undermine that authority or to bring disrespect upon it, or to interfere with its laws or regulations, was an offense not only against the ruler, but against the Lord. These monarchs by Divine right have now, however, passed from the world, or at least from that part of the world which has to do with literature. The late Kaiser was the last of the autocrats who was in a position to decide, practically on his own sole authority, that certain literature was pernicious for the state and must be prohibited.

The rulers who have been placed in office under governments representative of the people, as for instance in the United States or in Great Britain, find themselves confronted with special perplexities in regard to this matter of the control of literature. Such terms as *the liberty of the citizen, the right to freedom of speech, the claim of each man not only to hold his own theories as to government, or the organization of society, or the methods of managing business or the relations of the employer to the employee,* are held as fairly expressing the rights of a free man in a free state. On the other hand, all patriotic citizens, whether or not they have responsibilities as rulers in the communities, may well be troubled with the realization that printed matter (whether in the form of newspapers or of books) is being placed in the hands of comparatively ignorant readers, which is certain to demoralize these readers. It may fairly be claimed as of first importance for a country with representative government, in which every citizen has, through his vote, a share in shaping the national policies, that whatever measures are necessary should be taken to secure for all citizens trained minds, capable of understanding the issues; sound judgment that will guard them from taking hasty or revolutionary decisions; and an assured foundation as far as morals and character are concerned. The policies and the actions of the gov-

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ernment of a republic ought to represent the mature and deliberate judgment of intelligent and patriotic citizens. The peace and welfare of a republic, or of a city within a republic, should not be exposed to the "winds of doctrine" of wild, anarchistic theorists. It is the duty of the government to assure the protection of property, and if organized propaganda is made to incite the people with no property, or with a small allowance of property, to assail the property rights of their neighbors, we have the beginnings of anarchy.

A person whose utterances, whether oral, written, or printed, have served as an incitement to crime is, under the existing law, held as *particeps criminis*. In the cases in which crime has not actually been accomplished, but in which the accused has, through his utterances, done what he could to bring about misdeeds such as manslaughter, arson, assault, sabotage, etc., such person, as an instigator to crime, is held guilty of criminal action. If a man should push over a piece of coping from a roof into the street, he is guilty of attempted manslaughter even though no passer-by may be struck by the stone. A person who provides the funds for the printing of incendiary utterances, or who, having knowledge of their purpose and character, gives cooperation in bringing such propaganda into circulation, is held to be *particeps criminis*, just as he who "utters" (that is to say circulates) forged money is a party to the fraud on the public.

A state has the right and the duty to maintain its own existence, and in a government that represents the people the officials are, of course, under obligation to their fellow citizens to neglect no measures that may be necessary to uphold the laws, to maintain peace, order, and justice, and to protect life and property.

It is equally important, however, under a representative government, to prevent the support of law and order from being utilized for political purposes, that is to say for party purposes. The rights of minorities must be respected; even cranks and fools have the right to claim a hearing; and there should be no restriction on the expression of opinions, even of exceptional opinions, simply on the ground of their unpopularity or because they do not fit in with the views of the party in power. We may recall that under a Dominican pope, the Congregation of the Index would be constituted with a Dominican majority, and, as a result, works by Franciscans would frequently be condemned as heretical. If the succeeding pope was a Franciscan, the writings of the Dominicans would suffer in like manner.

In our American community it is, of course, essential that censorship should be neither Democratic nor Republican. We cannot permit the protectionists to suppress literature upholding freedom of trade; nor would it be in order (however desirable such course might seem to be for the sake of civilized progress) to interfere with the circulation of books defending the mediæval rubbish of the protectionists.

Everyone but an extreme pacifist (and I use the term to describe one who would prefer to accept domination rather than to have a hand lifted in defense of the liberties of his country) will admit that when the nation is at war there is requirement for a more strenuous standard of censorship than ought to be permitted in time of peace. It may be assumed that a nation has the same right to defend its existence that is accorded to an indi-

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vidual. The life of a nation must often depend upon the readiness of its citizens to take up arms in its defense. Anyone, therefore, who refuses himself to render the service to which the state is entitled, who discourages others from volunteering, and who incites his fellow citizens to refuse to obey the summons of a conscription act, is acting as an enemy to his country as directly as if he were using a gun in the ranks of the invaders.

If at the time, for instance, of the Deerfield massacre, some citizen of pacifist tendencies had stood by, refusing to join his comrades in saving the women and children from being slaughtered on the ground that it was not right to kill a fellow being (in this case an Indian with a tomahawk), we imagine that the New Englanders of the day would have made short shrift of such an unpatriotic and muddle-headed citizen. If, in addition to refusing himself to take part in the defense of the village, the pacifist of that time had preached to his fellow citizens the doctrine of non-resistance and as a result of his preaching the community had been devastated by the Indians, he would have been as much a criminal aggressor as if he had actually taken part in the massacre with his own tomahawk. We find, however, no record in the history of New England of any such pacifists. The foundation of the sturdy New England communities would have been impossible if such men (or women) had existed and had been permitted to demoralize their neighbors with the doctrine that it was wrong to defend women and children against murderers.

Most of us hold today that there is no logical distinction to be made between the resistance that was then necessary in order to save the citizens from the tomahawks of the Indians, and that which was required of Europe in 1914 and in which America (shamefully late) finally took part in 1917, against the bombs and the brutalities of the Prussian invaders of France and of Belgium.

No ideal of "free speech" can be permitted to stand in the way of prompt repression of utterances, whether spoken or printed, which incite men to refuse to do their share in the defense of the republic. When, as was the case in the late war, the cooperation of loyal citizens is required to prevent the imposition of militarism and the rule of autocracy, and the republic is fighting to preserve not only its own independence but the liberties of all the non-aggressive nations, the repression of disloyal teachings becomes a duty not only to the state but to civilization itself, like the suppression of smallpox or the plague. There is good ground, therefore, for the conclusion that if only an all-wise and absolutely impartial authority could be constituted, it would be desirable to restrict the circulation of printed words, whether published in newspapers or in books, which are likely to bring about injury to the state by demoralizing the thought and the action of the citizens.

It may at once be admitted, however, that no plan has as yet been arrived at under which can be secured a censorship that shall be absolutely wise, free from partisanship and from the risk of personal animus, and that could, therefore, be trusted to exercise its authority without the risk of bringing about injustice that would be more serious than the evil it has undertaken to remedy. The action, during the years of the late war, of the censorship authorities in England, well intentioned as it undoubtedly was, more than once brought the authorities into ridicule. We have had recently the

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experience in this country, under the pressure of war requirements, of a muddled government censorship, which has given evidence of the difficulties of securing any wise exercise of the power.

We have in this city a great benevolent society, supported by the subscriptions of patriotic citizens, whose purpose has been to protect the community against immoral and pernicious literature. This society has undoubtedly done a real service for the community. It would be a rash man who would decide that there was good ground for bringing its operations to a close or for taking away the authority that has been given to it; and yet we may realize that the managers, with their own natural limitations and a fair share of personal prejudices, have more than once committed serious injustice against an individual or against the community, and have brought their own work and the whole principle of censorship into disrepute.

I think we may safely take the ground that such a voluntary society, that is to say a society constituted on individual action and whose authority did not have its source with the voters of the community, ought not to be given the final decision in such a matter as that of the censorship of literature. There should always be the privilege of appeal. It is not in order for a group of people, however well meaning, to have placed in their hands the power to destroy the property or to undermine the character of their fellow citizens. I do not know what the best machinery would be to utilize for an appeal from a condemnation on the part of such an unofficial society. The judgment, whether it were to constitute a decision against the circulation of a bad book, or against the suppression of a book which had a right to be circulated, ought to be given without delay. An appeal to a court whose calendars were already overloaded and whose decision could not be reached for a term of years, would not serve to secure justice. It might be possible to take the ground that no decision on the part of the society should be held as binding and effective unless and until it had been confirmed by a commission representing the authority of the Supreme Court or perhaps of the Court of Appeals. The action of the society would then have the character, not of a prohibition but of a presentment or indictment, carrying authority only when confirmed by the court.

The society in question concerns itself slightly, if at all, with literature classed as political, and it is this group which presents the most serious difficulties, difficulties that are increasing from year to year. Every government has the right to maintain its own existence. There may well be question whether the officials are not justified in preventing the circulation of propaganda matter which assails the authority of government and which incites people to take measures to overturn such authority. In this matter also there is always the risk of hasty, partisan, and ill-judged action. I am inclined to the conclusion that the government, whether of a nation, city, or state, is entitled to make a presentment against literature the circulation of which the officials believe to be antagonistic to the maintenance of law and of order, but that such presentment ought itself to be passed upon by a commission representing the authority of one of the existing courts, or of a special court constituted for the purpose.

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MURRAY HILL ON HIS TRAVELS

CHICAGO, *October*, 1920.

THE idea occurred to me that one of the spiritual and æsthetic advantages of riding on trains is the excellent opportunity this gives you for contemplating and reflecting upon the sky. Not

> Upon that little tent of blue
> Which prisoners call the sky.

A vast thing! Full (on a day like this) of rich argosies, great chariots, and noble chargers. Now it is a curious thing. When I look at the sea I realize what a tiny atom I am, and I feel very small indeed inside; but when I look up at the great sky I seem to expand inside, and my spirit becomes very large, akin to the spirit of the sky. Those who are soothsayers, or what not, let them answer me with the reason, why is that?

Then in the distance I saw moving along close to the ground a black little storm. Out of it spat angry, jagged little forks of lightning. And a torrent stood straight between it and the little patch of earth over which it was. And I thought, now the people who are experiencing this storm do not feel that at the moment a little storm is passing over their plot of land, but to them it seems that the universe is in convulsion.

The newsman entered the compartment with a pile of magazines. "Do you read?" he asked. I shook my head, "No".

* * * *

Chicago has been maligned. The world has been deceived about that city. I must set this matter aright.

My last (and only) visit to Chicago before this was at the time of the World's Fair. I went in the charge of my mother. Spacious accommodations were not obtained for me. I remember that I slept in a closet. My principal impression of the city, during the years since, was that they had, in some places, board sidewalks there.

It was night. That is the time to arrive in Chicago. Do just as I did. I emerged from the Illinois Central Station at Twelfth Street or, as I believe the block there is called, Park Row. I loaded my things into a cab, and we turned into a purring stream of other glow-worm cars up the noble, slightly winding stretch of Michigan Avenue: now a far-flung scarf of cool, purple night, embroidered with its stately march of tall-stemmed, yellow-gleaming lamps. Ahead to the left, a symmetrical facade of twinkling windows, the Blackstone; and at the right a deep sense of the city's mighty foil, the Lake. As we went, I said: "This, indeed, is very beautiful." And so, too, by day. There is a sense of flowing rhythm about that avenue. It breathes distinction and charm. And it does not look like a street anywhere else. It has the feel of Chicago.

* * * *

I went round seeing my friends. One of the peculiarities of Chicago is the taste that city displays for youth, slenderness, and elegance in its liter-

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ary editors. There is my friend, young and slender and elegant Henry Blackman Sell, who for long ran the book page of the "Daily News"; succeeded by young and slender and elegant Harry Hansen. And there is my friend, equally young and slender and elegant Burton Rascoe, literary editor (until quite recently) of the "Tribune". And there (but, my goodness! I should in politeness have mentioned her first) is my friend, the even younger, slenderer, and more elegant Fanny Butcher, who conducts the "tabloid book reviews" feature of the "Tribune", and also is proprietor of the dainty shop, "Fanny Butcher: Books". Llewellyn Jones, literary editor of the "Evening Post", it is true, looks as though he might be thirty. But that doesn't alter the general situation.

I was glad when Burton said that Keith Preston would be at luncheon, as I had never met him. Now I am not unfamiliar with the society of humorists—but I am not going to say what you think I am. I am not going to say that I have not found the conversation of humorists any funnier than that of any other men. Not at all. The forty or fifty professional humorists of my acquaintance are easily the most humorous men I know.

He appeared at the moment appointed—a thing, I have found, which some humorists don't always do. A smallish, youngish chap, in large spectacles; very modest, very "retiring" in effect; friendly enough in manner, in a quiet way; and so "soft-spoken" it was difficult to hear him even across a small table. Eccentric, as you might say, as a humorist, in that he says nothing in the slightest humorous. Commented upon this later to a friend of his, and she replied: "He never does." And so, you see, I (supported more or less by Burton) had to supply all the humor of the luncheon.

* * * *

It was a gray and rather turbulent day as we sped along by the lake. A racing wind dashed our faces with spray, and the whitecaps from far out leaped and ran over the choppy surface toward the shore. It always bothers me to be told: "Too bad it isn't a nice day. I did so hope it would be. Yesterday was such a glorious day!" There is not only one kind of a day which is fine. Beauty does not depart from the earth when the blaze of the sun is softened by a veil. What poetry, as the Dutchmen well knew, is in a day hung close to a sky of reverie, in a haze of mauve! There is grandeur, too, an organ-like tune for the spirit, in an angry day. Indeed, I like days of every kind.

* * * *

He lives (with his wife and several children) somewhere, a monstrous way, I gathered, from the office of the "Daily News", where he writes editorials. Carl Sandburg I mean. But by putting up for the night at a friend's house he was able to attend the little party in Hyde Park. He went out with me on the train to Fifty-second Street. About as tall as I am (that's rather tall), sturdily built, somewhere in the early forties, hair considerably more than touched with iron grey, face decidedly weather-beaten in effect, furrowed and lined. General impression, a man who has done a good deal of hard work—one who has lived far from softly. Movement, deliberate. Manner, a blend of deep seriousness and of kindness toward all. Not talkative. Makes no jests, and does not respond with anything like hilarity to your jokes.

I heard a delightful lady speak of him in a most motherly and affection-

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ate tone of voice as looking "like an amiable second-story man".

We were obliged to stand in the train, and there was little opportunity for conversation. Walking away from the suburban station I discovered by some chance that he is very fond of Belloc.

He made a valiant effort to carve the meat (the honor of which function I wisely declined), but could not grasp the principle of how he should go as to the grain, and finally gave it up.

After being much urged, he took from his pocket a few manuscript poems (rather soiled and worn in look) and read them, without any effort at stage play.

* * * *

Excellent (remarkably so) bookstores of every character in Chicago.

* * * *

Undoubtedly the worst place to eat in, that city, of anywhere in the world.

* * * *

At the hotel desk I was handed a card: the gentleman's name and, as is the fashion with Englishmen, neatly engraved in the lower left-hand corner the name of his club, the Athenæum; written in pencil, "I'll be in till half-past seven." I got him on his room telephone. "At the stand where the newspapers are. I'll be there," he said. We went down through all those labyrinthean little lobbies to the grill for dinner.

You are, doubtless, familiar with portraits of him. Had I not known his picture so well I certainly should not have taken this to be E. V. Lucas or, indeed, a man who had anything at all to do with literature. A youngish fifty, perhaps. Rather tall. A good weight, not over heavy. Light on his feet, like a man who has taken his share in active field games. Something of a stoop. A smile, good, natural, but sly. Dark hair, shot with grey. Noble prow of a nose. Most striking note of all, that ruddy complexion, ruddy to a degree which (as I reflect upon the matter) seems to be peculiar to a certain type of Englishman.

He studied the card with deep attention. Evidently not a man (as I am) who eats carelessly, regarding one thing (if good of its kind) as about as good as another. Ordered an excellent meal. Very particular as to the manner in which dishes were served. Much annoyed that the waiter did not instantly replace the silver cover upon the dish from which he had just served the roast beef. Spoke to him sharply because he was withdrawing from the table when something else remained to be done. Amazed at the indifference of the man, who (I suppose Mr. Lucas did not know) was going to strike on the day after the morrow, and probably held all diners in scorn. Topped off with a very handsome strawberry-shortcake.

He had been in Chicago several days and had not made himself known to anyone, except at Marshall Field's bookstore which he spoke of as the finest bookstore within his knowledge. Had come from the Orient by way of San Francisco. California? "Most beautiful place I ever saw." Curious to hear all that might be said concerning recent literary visitors from England. Appeared to be much amused at the number of them. Was interested to learn the standing over here of English writers who had taken up residence in the United States years ago—to name one, Richard Le Gallienne. Inquired if they had become naturalized American citizens. Was considerably put out because he had not been able to buy any of the books of Edith Wharton since his arrival in

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this, her own country. (I offered the paper shortage and other difficulties present in American publishing as my country's apology.)

He said: "I think she is about the best there is in England or America."

He continued to look at me rather severely in the matter of our failure to appreciate Mrs. Wharton. Indeed, his manner (I reflected with some amusement) might imply that he held me personally responsible for everything over here of which he did not approve. We spoke of a recent visitor here for whose work neither of us cared. "*You* bought his books," said Mr. Lucas. (Not *I*!) "*You* have pretty well ruined things over here with your Prohibition." He used to look forward to a meal; but now...! I hastened to assure him that in the matter of the Eighteenth Amendment I was quite (oh, quite!) guiltless. And, "*You* are easily pleased with your comic supplements." In broad American humor, I was charmed to hear, he liked very much Walt Mason, and Mutt and Jeff. Don Marquis he thought (rightly enough) our best columnist.

He made a couple of horribly bad puns. I can't for the life of me recollect them.

He liked my Tarkington story about "Hamlet". "There's a good deal in the Belasco idea, too," he said. "I like to think of Shakespeare as a practical man." As to the many merits of slang, he denied them. On the ground that it was a jargon of stock phrases. "In speaking, as in writing," he reasoned, "what one should seek is an individual, a fresh rearrangement of words." Now there is a good deal to be said, both thus and so, as to this matter, but (and I couldn't think of less space for the subject) I cannot take up a chapter for it here.

When he had finished a cigar or two he took from his pocket a very worn-looking, cloth-covered cigarette case and dumped from it a cigarette onto the palm of one hand.

He commented on the cost of living in Chicago. "Just think of that, nearly three pounds a night for a bedroom!" The other evening he had gone "out" for his dinner, to a place he had observed earlier in the day and which, from the look of it, in England would have been very "reasonable". "And everything was about one-third more than here." Asked how he would find the situation in New York.

Discussed publishing. "Not much risk about a book," he said, "when everything gets published and when people buy anything." He as well as I, it seems, had written what the trade terms "jacket copy", that is the advertising matter describing a book which goes on its paper wrapper. "You have here such a number of words which make it easy, words which mean so much, and mean nothing at all, like *caveman* and *mother love*."

We made an appointment to meet at breakfast. He was leaving for the East shortly before noon the following day.

* * * *

In that Louis Seize lobby he crammed a charge of tobacco into a very old-looking pipe, and remarked that he was sorry he had not "met" us before, as he had wished he "could find somebody to go to the music halls with". "Us" (or we) being, presumably, Mr. and Mrs. Hahner and me (Mrs. Hahner, known to all the rest of the world by her maiden name of Marcella Burns, presiding genius of the Marshall Field bookstore)—the extent, as you might say, of his "circle" in Chicago. And the only "music

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hall" there with which I myself am acquainted is the Marigold Garden, where I went with a remarkably interesting lady about whom (when this History is finished) I expect to write a novel. It will probably be called "The Yellow Slippers".

This was the first time I had seen him got up for out-of-doors. He wore a sport hat, very light in color, the material of which I can best describe as resembling cat fur; a stringy muffler, also light in color; a wrinkled raincoat, and beneath this a detachable woolen lining or under coat. Unlike most Englishmen, he did not (at any time I saw him) carry a stick. He told me that he "always froze to death" on motor-car drives.

There was a light rain when we started; the top was up, and he was assigned to the front seat with George Hahner, to give him the better view. Here he appeared to enjoy himself hugely in a very animated discussion of baseball throughout the trip. Though he contended that cricket was the better sport, there is no doubt he was considerably "hipped" by our game. Had been going by himself since he got to the States. Went to a Sunday game in San Francisco.

Back by the hotel to take on his luggage. Men began bringing it out; and what they brought was stowed away in the car. A lull, then, in the proceedings, and everybody (not owning the property) stout-heartedly affirmed that that was no amount of luggage at all. With that sly, Lucas smile: "Oh! there's more to come."

It was one of those outwardly dingy-looking stations in the interior of Chicago. We drove up at the side, and as an attendant loaded Mr. Lucas's traveling equipment onto a little hand-truck I made this inventory of the outfit:

SEVEN THINGS

1—Steamer trunk.
2—Cardboard hat box.
3—Suitcase.
4—Army roll.
5—Laundry bag, half filled.
6—Umbrella.
7—Bag containing some sort of clubs, too short for golf sticks, probably cricket bats.

Indeed, he had eight things; he carried in his hand a parcel (in shape suggesting books) done up in a piece of newspaper.

"All aboard!" We stood with him in a group by the steps of his coach. The little truck had not arrived. What was to be done! Then the station attendant was seen propelling his vehicle down the platform at a rattling clip. Mr. Lucas rapidly shook hands round the circle, turned and sprang up the steps—an odd, a humorous, and a memorable figure; stoop, smile, whitish hat, and long coat flowing out after him. A bevy of porters hustled his collection of things aboard. The train began to move; and only four people in Chicago knew that this particular and very distinguished English man of letters had ever been there.

* * * *

"Whyinhell don'tcher watch out where you're goin'!" yelled State Street taxi driver.

"Brother," I said to him, "pardon me. I was thinking: who painted her? Do you suppose it could have been Renoir?"

"Poor fish!" said taxi man. Even so.

MURRAY HILL

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MAY SINCLAIR

BY C. A. DAWSON SCOTT

AT a London Club one night a speaker quoted these sentences from "Mary Olivier—A Life":

> By the gate of the field her sudden, secret happiness came to her. She could never tell when it was coming, nor what it would come from. It had something to do with the trees standing up in the golden white light. It had come before with a certain sharp white light flooding the fields, flooding the room.... She stood still by the gate...holding her happiness.

He deduced from them that the cause of art is a longing on the part of the artist to communicate to others a thrill he has himself experienced. It was not the trees, nor the light flooding the fields, but Mary's happiness in them that was of importance.

If we accept this theory and agree that art in its different forms makes its appearance because the individual feels an urge to share a sensation he has experienced, we find an explanation of much that is perplexing. The world of today is full of little shoots and pushings of green art. They are plants of no outstanding beauty, but are encouraged by sedulous little editors who perceive that in their walled-in garden big things would be out of place, and who also perhaps prefer annuals to perennials. Each tiny plant, however, may and probably does owe its existence to that longing, inherent in the majority, to communicate the wonder of its experience, its simple experience of light and heat. The same is true of the bigger plants in the art world, in fact of every plant and all, and once we have grasped that, we no longer wonder that the little chickweed cannot produce the pomegranate, or flower as the rose.

This theory also accounts for the fact that so much art lacks universality. It is born of a narrow personal experience, and appeals therefore only to natures capable of similar experiences. Its roots do not go down to the vivifying springs, the fountains of the earth. For the little artists it is a case of many men, many keyboards, with the manipulator only able to play on certain of them, only able perhaps to strike a note here and a note there.

The critic who accepts this theory of the soul trying to shape something, by means of which it will give back to humanity the more poignant of its experiences, is obliged by it to take a very broad, quite impersonal view of the result. Here is a gift horse, he would say, and we must not only not consider whether its teeth will show it to be aged, but must accept the animal gratefully as a live creature, a creature of great and interesting possibilities!

Which brings us to that curiously criticized work "Mary Olivier". In America it sold well; in England it was perhaps the most talked-of book of the season and I have heard it discussed from every point of view, except that given above. Yet in it the

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writer is undoubtedly trying to pass on to the reader the thrills life has given her—thrills strange to some of us, the thrill of the metaphysician, the thrill of muscular energy, the thrill of a certain sort of landscape, the thrill that comes with the making of word-patterns. The method was a matter of intellectual choice; the medium not more so, than is to a plant the flower it produces; and whereas the former brought the receiving mind into contact with a technique second to none, the latter must be accepted as the natural florescence of that particular soul. To say the book was "dull", was "morbid", was "lacking in drama", as did some critics, was beside the mark. Its quality, the quality that made it valuable, was its sincerity—while its method made it a delight. Moreover, beyond the sincerity of it, lay the fact that this study of a life racked by cramping circumstance, and blooming in the secret places of the mind and spirit, was a revelation of human possibilities; while finally, the publication of this book should have been welcomed as proof that Miss Sinclair had broken with tradition, that the great upheaval through which our civilization has lately passed had clarified her gift as it has those of so many others, and that in future we may look to her for books which shall be neither traditional nor derivative, but the fruit of her individual experience.

II

May Sinclair was born at Rockferry in Cheshire, and was one of six children, the other five being boys. She was educated partly at home, partly at Cheltenham. Among her schoolfellows was another child, destined in after life to become a writer—Mrs. Allen Harker—but the two novelists did not draw together in friendship until after schooldays were at an end. Meanwhile, Miss Sinclair, returning home, began to produce verse, and by the time she was twenty had already written a little sheaf of poems. In those days Mr. Gladstone was a force scattering postcards of well-meant but badly-expressed encouragement ("he was sensible of the merits they contained") on beginners, and the usual postcard, with the addition of a few reviews, was perhaps the sum total of what happened to the two modest books of verse which Messrs. Kegan Paul published. This was succeeded some time afterward by an article on metaphysics which had been commissioned by an American journal. Thus Miss Sinclair's first publications in England were verse, and in America prose.

A friend having suggested that she had it in her to write stories, she tried her prentice hand on "Audrey Craven", a book of which she now thinks very little. This was published on the half-profits system, and brought not much more grist to the mill than did "The Vicar of Wakefield". It was followed by "Mr. and Mrs. Nevill Tyson", and "Two Sides of a Question"; and with the publication of each of these, Miss Sinclair's standing improved, until recognition came in both hemispheres with "The Divine Fire".

Miss Sinclair lives in St. John's Wood. For some years, whenever London seemed too full of a clamant vitality for her to work in peace, she fled to a little village in Yorkshire; but, as so doing meant spending nearly a whole day in the train, the northern home has been exchanged for one in Gloucestershire, and she is discovering for herself whether at "Stow-on-the-Wold the wind blows cold".

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III

In "The Divine Fire", which sold very widely in America, Miss Sinclair gave no indication of her dissatisfaction with the traditional method of novel-writing; she did no more in that book than give her readers a glimpse of under-currents. Her other novels, arresting pieces of work, were the well-told stories of the competent craftsman. "The Three Sisters", "The Combined Maze", "The Tree of Heaven", were good in matter and in manner. But other writers, such for instance—to mention only some of the women—as Mary E. Mann with "Ronald Love", Margaret L. Woods with "A Village Tragedy", Edith Wharton with "The House of Mirth", Elizabeth Robins with "A Dark Lantern", Violet Hunt with "White Rose of Weary Leaf", were producing novels as fine. Miss Sinclair was one of a golden fellowship, but until she wrote "Mary Olivier" she did not stand out from among them as definitely critical of tradition.

Dissatisfaction, however, was in the air. A number of writers, weary of the iterated tale, of the melange of sentimentality, convention, faked incident and false psychology known as the popular novel, were making experiments of one sort and another; and when Miss Sinclair published "Mary Olivier", she ranged herself definitely with the pioneers. Her position as a writer who has had the courage to look at life from an individual standpoint will be strengthened by her forthcoming book. In "The Romantic" she uses the direct method, presenting her story through the mind of one of the characters. This method is also employed by others of the group to which she belongs, for instance, Dorothy Richardson; but to say that Miss Sinclair derives from this writer would be doing her less than justice. For one thing, Miss Sinclair was experimenting with this method before Miss Richardson began to write, and for another their work has nothing else in common. Miss Richardson's is monumental. Having chosen a dumping-ground she is pouring on to it novel-load after novel-load of heterogeneous objects, and by so doing is raising an immense, an almost Cyclopean, mound. Miss Sinclair, on the contrary, is selective. She produces an effect of lightning, of concentrated seeing, of extraordinary and sudden brilliancy, and this effect is particularly apparent in her presentation of John Roden Conway in "The Romantic". I do not know of any piece of writing more subtly forcible than the lifting of veil after veil from the man's personality until the creature stands revealed in pitiable nakedness. Miss Sinclair presents him to us, and the reader is left to find the pity of humanity for a soul so marred, to murmur in fear and trembling, "Can such things be?" and to acknowledge unwillingly, sorrowfully, that they are.

The method chosen, this method of direct presentation, that is to say of presentation through a certain consciousness, has its advantages. It constrains the writer to a rigid aloofness. Admirably disciplined, she no longer "walks in the garden", but has become an impersonal First Cause; in fact the method is one that may be recommended to the prolix and the young. Even so, it is a case of "if youth could ———" for the method is peculiarly exacting. In Miss Sinclair's hands it proves at times, not so much a revelation of the individual through which she is telling the story, as of those by whom that individual is surrounded. This is the case with "The Roman-

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tic". The interest is centred in John Roden Conway, and he is seen through the eyes of a girl who loved him. The opening of those eyes to the fact that he is a hopeless degenerate, the opening of them by incident after incident till we reach the culminating horror of his death, is the theme of the book.

Considered as a story, it is interesting to note that "The Romantic" is a stronger book than "Mary Olivier". Gerald Cumberland says that the writer "who at all times and seasons searches and burrows for the *mot juste* ...loves letters more than he loves life", and this is a reproach which may be leveled at too many of our pioneers. The primary object of the novelist is to tell a tale; in other words, much as the manner in which a tale is told concerns us, the story concerns us more, and when we have swept the house clear of old rubbish, it were a pity if we should find ourselves without the wherewithal to garnish it. The Greeks and Elizabethans gave us great stories, their successors occupied themselves with technique, and time has spoken with regard to both.... Miss Sinclair has an amazing knowledge of sex psychology, she has a penetrative imagination, and hers is a quite remarkable technique. We now await from her the great, universal, human story that alone is worthy of her powers.

MOTHER

BY EDGAR DANIEL KRAMER

SHE lay in his arms like a golden gleam lost in a shadowy wood;
Breath of her breath, and flesh of her flesh, and soul of her soul was he;
She held him close and she kissed his mouth, till his lips were running blood,
Then she whispered low, *If you love me so, bring the heart of your mother to me.*

Heart of your mother! Heart of your mother! whispered the fragrant breeze,
And his face was pale as he hastened on, while the sun burned red in the west;
Heart of your mother! Heart of your mother! came the breathing of lilac trees,
As he stealthily stole through the cottage door and tore the heart from her breast.

The night grew cold and the winds moaned low, as the white moon topped the hill,
And he stumbled on with her bleeding heart down the ways where the shadows run;
Oh, the gray ghosts wailed as he fled away—then he fell and the dark grew still,
But the heart of his mother murmured, *Speak! Are you hurt, my son?*

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IDEAS AND STORIES

BY H. W. BOYNTON

MR. GEORGE inscribes his "Caliban" affectionately and by permission to Joseph Conrad, twice saluting him in these dozen lines as "dear Master".... "Duty commands that I express my gratitude for the generosity with which you received my last novel, remained unbemused by the anger of the reactionaries and the artistic prejudice of the advanced." "Blind Alley" seems not to have "gone" quite as its author would have liked. What did Joseph Conrad really say or think of it? In what sense was he generous? In what sense or with what justification does Mr. George call him Master? I for one cannot answer any of these questions to my own satisfaction. I see nothing in common between these two writers except their common and habitual use of a vague form called "the novel": three or four hundred pages of narrative, description, dialogue, and commentary which more or less hang together through their concern with a limited and related group of imagined or alleged persons. Such seems to be the current and amiable theory or consensus as to what a novel is. Now it is very true that there is more difficulty in distinguishing true fiction from sham than in distinguishing the real and the false in most other fields of art. And it is true that any attempt to bound the novel by rules or set its physical limits or belittle its enormous advantages of flexibility and range in mood and technique would be folly and an offense. But it is also true that without some simple principle or touchstone to guide us, we have no means of judging whether the novel, as word or as thing, has any intelligible quality or value for us, now or in the future.

We have such a touchstone, and it is nothing but the touchstone we apply frankly and contentedly to the drama —the action. A drama is no good if it is not first of all a play, and a novel is no good if it is not first of all a story. Henry James is likely to be remembered as the formless one; yet the two unfinished novels printed after his death, with the scaffolding showing, and the carefully sorted materials lying at hand for the moment when a carefully articulated plan or plot should have need of them, prove how passionately intent this long-winded one of popular fancy was upon his tale, his story, as a living and complete organism to be revealed, and not a dummy to be draped, however elaborately, in a theory or "style".

The chief trouble with the brilliant young "novelists" of the hour is, for many of us, their failure to compass an action, to tell a story. For me, it is the trouble with all of the novels of W. L. George, for instance. Here is

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"Caliban", a brilliant but inchoate fantasia on the caveman theme, or let us say on the theme of the middle-class philistine devotee of "success". Here we are, at the beginning, with our crude will blindly grasping, and here we are at the end with that same will yet groping blindly, though no longer with any hope. Between lies a greatly extended account of the kind of thing such a man does and feels under the kind of circumstances. We know no more or less about Bulmer on page four hundred than on page forty. He is a type brilliantly projected as a George or a Wells or a Walpole or a Mackenzie knows how to project him,—and there is no more to say. He is not the focus or the fulcrum of a human action, he is a kind of staving fellow we all more or less know of in private acquaintance or in public life. What he specifically does as the man Bulmer doesn't much matter, and what he is thinking about gets to be a bore —it is so patently what the author thinks such a man would probably be thinking about. As for what he himself *is* about, that least of all would Mr. George be able, or interested, to explain. It is all negative or at least inconclusive. We perceive that power cannot comfort a Bulmer in his frustration as possession comforts a Soames Forsyte. Bulmer's last word for us is: "One doesn't hitch on to anybody. One just messes about a bit in the middle of life, and life sails away."

I don't know that the central figure in "The Vanity Girl" of Compton Mackenzie has much more stability. Mr. Mackenzie's women do not seem to me real; they are not repellent, for the simple reason that we perceive (or feel) them to be clever boys adventuring in disguise. Sylvia Scarlett reappears in this story as a nominal foil for the Vanity Girl, but this is a gesture to distract our eye. Dorothy, with her soft feminine airs, is really as hard, as masculinely hard at core, as Sylvia. However, this writer does have the instinct for action and, once you accept his people as figures in a picaresque novel, you have something to tie to, as you never do with Mr. George. The "trouble" here, indeed, is that Mr. Mackenzie, not being aware of his true job, deviates into sense, that is, into interpretation, just often enough to queer his real pitch. The Lord made him a satirical romancer, but being by current code a "novelist", why should he be expected to do any one thing in particular! There is of course a vast deal of verisimilitude in "The Vanity Girl". For years the author was associated in the productions of the London Gaiety Theatre, and (like so many modern novelists) he knows at first hand all the ins and outs of theatrical life. But as he is not a realist, this is of only incidental benefit to his readers. His main job is to relate the adventures of a damsel of obscure origin who sets out to conquer success, gains her end, and finds ashes in her mouth. In fact the substance of the tale is rather strikingly like that of Douglas Goldring's recent story, "Margot's Progress". As a piece of portraiture, Mr. Goldring has, to my mind, altogether the better of it. Satirical brilliancy, amusing situations, are Mr. Mackenzie's forte. His attempt to contrive a serious if not happy ending with the marriage of Dorothy and her Jewish Caliban, is disconcerting rather than impressive.

"Possession" might have been the natural title for Mr. Galsworthy's new story, but for a passive meaning of the word which gives it ambiguity out of its context It is an eloquent exposition of the pathos of the mine-and-thine theory of society. This writer's

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popularity lies quite as much in his quality of lay preacher as in his verbal charm. There is the wistful magnetism of his style, and there is the "punch" of his discontent as minor prophet. The England in which he reached manhood, the England of his personal disenchantment, is still his most congenial theme. More narrowly, it is the England of a single class which really absorbs him, the snug, complacent, "warm" family connections of the upper middle class, whom he long ago embodied in the intimate ramifications of the Forsyte clan. This novel, Mr. Galsworthy says, continues "The Forsyte Saga": is a sequel to "The Man of Property" and "Indian Summer of a Forsyte". It continues also his exhaustive study of the stultifying influence of property-worship on "the backbone of England and on England herself as a nation among nations". As the Forsytes cling to the family possessions, make everything else secondary to the material safety of the clan, so, says the story-teller, England has clung to her holdings the world over, and developed imperialism as a safeguard of the status quo. Therefore (the time of this narrative is the late 'nineties) England's suzerainty over the Boers must be maintained at all costs, as a link in the chain which holds together the Empire at whose heart England lies safe.... So runs, in this instance, the "idea" that always dominates a Galsworthy novel.

As a story of human persons, "In Chancery" should rank among his best. I have small admiration or respect for a "Dark Flower" or a "Saint's Progress", in which this writer's sex taint and anti-Victorian prejudice seem to me painfully displayed. Mr. Galsworthy knows nothing about parsons and little about daughters and not a whole lot about married life. But he knows all about Forsytes as clan and caste and symbol. Soames Forsyte, the perfect Forsyte, is on the whole the main figure in the present narrative. His pitiless and piteous egotism, his mania for possession, are vigorously dealt with; but they are robust enough to survive all shocks, and we leave him thrilling at his first sight of his child. He has planned for a son, one to succeed him, to be himself over again; the child is a girl and there can be no other. He is bitterly disappointed. But suddenly, at sight of the infant, "his heart felt queer, warm, as if elated.... The sense of triumph and possession, renewed possession, swelled within him. ... By God this—this thing was *his!*" Soames Forsyte bears on the torch of Forsytism. It is for Jolyon, the painting Jolyon who recognizes himself as "not quite pure Forsyte", to abandon, in rescuing Irene from Soames, the Forsyte conventions—though his simultaneous appropriation of Irene would seem sufficiently in the family character! Irene remains what she was in an earlier narrative, one of those beautiful, mysterious, passionate creatures who hardly live but for the great affair of love—the only type of woman Galsworthy has any real enthusiasm for.

With the same adroitness and dispatch that she has always displayed in turning out short stories and war articles and out-of-door sketches, Mrs. Rinehart now and then tosses off a four hundred page novel. I always take up one of these with the expectation (which is never disappointed) of finding an extremely brisk, clever presentation of some aspect of current life which the plain citizen is conscious of fumbling over, and is rejoiced to have this writer interpret for him with so

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congenial an admixture of acuteness and sentiment, realism of detail and romanticism of purpose. "A Poor Wise Man" is up-to-the-minute in theme and up-to-the-audience in treatment. An after-the-war novel of American life, it "handles" without fear and without confusion such burning themes (they burn most of our fingers painfully enough) as radicalism, organized labor, city politics, and the modern girl. The girl is Lily Cardew, granddaughter of a rich and ruthless employer who has dominated his family, his workmen, and his fellow citizens to the breaking-point. The girl's young man is Willy Cameron, a poor and virtuous but able youth from a small town who comes to Lily's city to be near her, and in the end wins the reward of the virtuous apprentice—power, the esteem of his fellow men, and the hand of his lady. Lily and Willy have been companions in uniformed though non-belligerent war work; if she had passed the friendly phase as soon as he, there would have been no story. As things are, she barely escapes the worst ("married in name only") with a revolutionary radical, Akers. His personal power over her is broken happily in time, even as his selfish schemes for profit by way of anarchy come to naught. There is sound and reassuring truth in the closing picture of the city, out of this foreign-bred turmoil, going still "about its business, and its business was homes". Mrs. Rinehart's interpretation is based upon the sturdy common sense of that great unorganized majority whose power, in clash with the noisy and efficient minorities, we are just beginning to understand.

In "The Rising Tide" and elsewhere, Mrs. Deland has had her say about current tendencies: new girl and so on. But she is always at her best in dealing with some problem of personal ethics, some timeless crux of principle or conduct which seems to present itself to her most vividly in that Chester setting whose slight remoteness in time and place appears to make her fancy most at ease. "An Old Chester Secret" presents such a problem, in renewing our acquaintance with old friends, Willy King, Mrs. Drayton, and the rest. Lydia Samson is the somewhat unexpected heroine of the tale, this time, with Dr. Lavendar, of course, playing his usual part of genial counselor and confidant. The story, I say, is based on one of those moral dilemmas which Mrs. Deland loves to put up to Dr. Lavendar. His solution, as always, sets considerations of human decency and common sense above the conventional rules of the Too-goods and the Grundys.

Farther south than Old Chester lies the little town in which the story of Seth Markwood, the lovely Anah, and the gallant-false Gil White is laid. These are the well-known romantic materials of "Painted Meadows", by Sophie Kerr: the sweet girl who has choice of two lovers chooses the wrong one, but in the end gives (and is permitted by fate to give) her deepest love to the one who has all the time deserved it. There is no "idea" behind this story, unless the deathless idea of fidelity and its reward with which neither romance nor life has as yet dispensed, however vigorously the chroniclers of fact may strive to conceal it with other and less exhilarating facts of "life".

Caliban. By W. L. George. Harper and Bros.

The Vanity Girl. By Compton Mackenzie. Harper and Bros.

In Chancery. By John Galsworthy. Charles Scribner's Sons.

A Poor Wise Man. By Mary Roberts Rinehart. George H. Doran Company.

An Old Chester Secret. By Margaret Deland. Harper and Bros.

Painted Meadows. By Sophie Kerr. George H. Doran Company.

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THE DEVIL IN LITERATURE

BY HARRY PRESSFIELD

THE devil as he is portrayed in literature deserves further consideration. Back in 1874 David Masson of Scotland wrote his essay, "The Three Devils". These devils were those created by the imaginations of Luther, Milton, and Goethe. Someone ought to write an essay on "The Four Devils", adding Dante's devil to the trio named; but, in the meantime, let us note in brief outline how different is the portrayal of the devil as conceived by these four writers.

Milton's devil is one of action. This is his chief fault. We can best understand him by what he says. He spurned contemplation. This was a natural outgrowth of that Puritanic conviction, shared by Milton, that people went to hell through too much action and too little contemplation. Because in our present-day life we lay emphasis on action, Milton's devil has become progressively more Christian. Of all the devils in literature he is the most fascinating. There is an attraction about his spirit of courage, initiative, defiance, and activity that commends him to the present generation.

Luther's devil is the most real. In its conception Luther gives us a more definite contribution than in his view of God. His idea of the devil rested on experience; for Luther's background of ideas contributed to the hallucination that visualized the spirit of evil. Men throw ink bottles only at the things which are tremendously real to them. Our advance in natural science ridicules the projection of the devil into the phenomena of nature, but to Luther the devil was a definite resisting medium with which he was continually called upon to wrestle. The psychologist would today say that this "wrestling with the devil" was merely a matter of mental depression.

Goethe's devil is the one most true to type. In "Faust" there is depicted a devil that is a devil irrecoverably. If Milton's devil is understood by following him in action, Goethe's devil is best understood by following him in speech. We understand Mephisto by what he says. He is a being that incarnates malice always. We must not overlook the allegorical meaning that Goethe gives him as the evil spirit in modern civilization. We see him, after 6,000 years of activity, plying his business in the crowded cities of mankind.

Dante's devil is symbolic only. He is not individualized by the poet. He plays no active part in the Inferno. As Dante moves through the various circles of the "truly dead", he sees men and women who have gone to their doom through the working of the divine justice; but the devil has no part in this. He is one among others, and of all the chief. Singularly enough, his personality is not even pervasive in hell. There he is a pris-

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oner and not a king. Dante's conception of the devil had no effect upon the thinking of the common people. Later the painters took Dante's devil from the pages of the Inferno and painted him upon the walls of the churches.

It is interesting to find Dante's devil locked in ice in the lowest circle of the Inferno. This is the result of Dante's reading of Matthew 25: 30 in the Vulgate. In our English the verse is translated, "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." In the Latin it reads: "There shall be weeping and chattering of teeth." Because of the chattering of teeth then it must be a place of intense cold; and there is also the symbolism that naturally associates the lowest circle of treachery with entire absence of warmth.

CHILDREN'S READING AND THE FALL BOOKS

BY ANNIE CARROLL MOORE

DON'T buy any more 'quick lunch' books for me. I want some books that I don't get tired of. Aren't there any better books written, or don't *you* know where to find them?" The mother of the ten year old boy who made this comment on her selection of books for his reading, had been in the habit of buying a book in the midst of her general shopping. She had given no further thought to the matter than to ask for another book for a boy of ten years at the price she was accustomed to pay. The boy's challenge to buy better books brought her to the children's room of a public library one day in September. There she was helped to make out a list, including "Treasure Island", "Tom Sawyer", "Robinson Crusoe", and Howard Pyle's "Merry Adventures of Robin Hood". Not one of these titles had her boy ever owned before. Moreover, this mother was roused to a sense of her own lack of equipment for meeting the book needs of an intelligent growing boy and determined to avail herself of every opportunity to make good in her future selection of his books. "From now on", she said, "it must be a book George will like and think worth reading, not just another book. I can see that I shall have to read more of his books and know what he thinks about them if I expect him to put any confidence in my judgment. It will take more time to buy his books but I feel a new interest already and I am going to have a good time doing it."

The second national celebration of Children's Book Week (November 15 to 20) is heralded by many signs of an awakened general interest in children's reading. State and city federations of women's clubs and parent-teacher associations, as well as libraries, schools, and churches are planning meetings to be addressed by speakers with first-hand knowledge of books for boys and girls. Informed discussion of specific books and interchange of experiences concerning them will be a

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characteristic feature of many of these meetings.

Authors, editors, and other men and women with large experience of life and active memories will share their store of reminiscence concerning books they knew and loved as children. Some of the reminiscent ones will, no doubt, draw sweeping deductions from their own likes and dislikes among books and attach them to children of today—a dangerous thing in practice, however well it may sound in theory. American children of today stand in a different relationship to books than the children of thirty or forty years ago. More of them have been exposed to more different kinds of books, as well as to a more varied experience of life, and as a natural consequence they are bringing keener intelligence, livelier interest, and a truer sense of contrast and comparison to their reading than children of an earlier generation.

Since the children of today are not likely to accept Children's Book Week as a mere benefit performance but may be counted upon, in most communities, to assert their claim to active participation in it, we must be prepared to go very much further than to issue annual invitations to groups of boys and girls to visit the bookshops to pay tribute to favorite authors and to look over the attractive displays of books designed for their reading and ownership. Their bookshelves must not be filled with undesired or unworthy volumes.

The ideas of book ownership and of a discriminating selection of books for both public and private use may well receive a liberal share of attention in public and private schools, as well as in the homes of boys and girls whose parents can afford to buy books. Fathers as well as mothers should take time to consider the books their sons and daughters are reading and owning —take time to read with them in the way Theodore Roosevelt read with his children. No teacher, no librarian, no bookseller or publisher can ever hope to come quite so near to the heart of the reading of individual boys and girls as the open-minded, generous-hearted fathers and mothers who have earned the confidence of children by sharing books with them from earliest childhood, proving by their own daily contacts with books that they enjoy reading for its own sake—that they are still making discoveries in books.

I recall the lament of a distinguished literary critic that his son, a boy of seventeen, then attending one of the best preparatory schools of the country, seemed to take no interest in reading books of any value during his holidays. "At his age", said the father, "I was reading everything worth while and would have talked freely about what I was reading if there had been anyone to talk with. My son never mentions a book of his own accord and looks bored when I do." It is very easy to bore boys and girls by talking too much about books and the good and bad effects of reading. How different a thing it is to create a desire to read a book we have just read, or reread with a new light breaking over it from a younger generation. It has been well said that "a boy is a just and generous reader". I know that my own truest and strongest impressions of boys' books have been gained from sharing the reading of thousands of boys of past and present generations rather than from conscious exercise or acceptance of adult criticism.

"Is it worth while", asks a young mother, not long out of college, "to devote any time to the children's books

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which are being published from year to year? The modern books all seem so much alike. Why not stick to the classics and standard authors for children?"

"Because I neither want to miss for myself nor do I want children to miss in books or in life a vivid sense of the present moment," is my invariable reply to such a question. It is too often forgotten that classics and standards were new books once. There's always a chance of discovering a new classic, since literature for children is by no means finished. Any list of best books should hold spaces for the unwritten books of the future. Some of us, watching the publishers' output for a score and more of years, welcomed such authors as Kipling, Barrie, and Kate Douglas Wiggin, although we were not on hand to greet Hans Andersen, Lewis Carroll, Edward Lear, and Mary Mapes Dodge. I have watched many good stories come to stay or come and go. I have seen the whole field of science, invention, games and sports, admirably covered with up-to-date, accurate, well written and well illustrated books for boys and girls. Out-of-door books, the modern animal story, popular books about birds, insects, trees and flowers have all come into existence and general use within my memory. I am inclined, therefore, to be very hospitable to new books of all kinds, provided they can show credentials of authenticity, originality of conception or selection, and sound workmanship.

I always approach the fall output with a thrill of expectancy even when I begin to read from galley proofs in the summer and take my impressions of the makeup of the books from such publishers' dummies as may be seen in advance. The present season is the richest since the war. Reprints of the picture books of Kate Greenaway and Leslie Brooke have been made in England, while from France two new books have come. Hansi's "L'Alsace Heureuse",—and what a happy Alsace is pictured here, from the Alsatian Sleeping Beauty wakened by a French soldier of the frontispiece to the little Alsatian girls dancing in the street on July 14, 1919! Streets, church towers, windows, marching troops, children playing at soldiers and at school, and the departure of the last German professor, are all made vivid by Hansi's inimitable and colorful pictures. No book yet written about the war will give children the interest or the pleasure of these pictures. The delightful A B C with stories in the French language, by Jules Le Maitre, illustrated by Job, is the second book.

The most beautiful American book of 1920 and the most noteworthy of books for children since the "Joan of Arc" of Boutet de Monvel, is "The Story of Jesus" by Ethel Nathalie Dana. Mrs. Dana has made a rare selection of reproductions in color from the early Italian painters. The text of her book is taken directly from the New Testament and with the pictures was originally arranged for the education and enjoyment of Mrs. Dana's own children, without thought of publication. Mrs. Dana, like many another mother, had looked in vain for a book associating the Bible story with pictures which should carry its meaning and beauty to children. She reminds us in an altogether admirable introduction to the book that "Jesus, Mary and the Saints were intimate friends and helpers in mediæval times and every one wanted to know the story of their lives. But in those days printing had not been invented, books were rare and few could read. The

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best way, therefore, of telling these stories was to make a series of large pictures which could be seen at the same time by many. So the walls of the churches were like picture books." Brief but effective notes concerning the lives of the artists who made these picture books—Giotto, Fra Angelico, Ghirlandaio, Duccio, Barnja da Siena and Gentile da Fabriano form a part of Mrs. Dana's introduction. The book includes forty very beautiful color prints and its typography and makeup are in keeping with the subject. Looked at as a single book its price may seem prohibitive to many parents and institutions. Regarded as a substitute for any one of a number of sets of books, costing from ten to twenty dollars more, I am confident that Mrs. Dana's book will fill a larger and more permanent place in any home or library.

As I read "The Story of Opal" in book form, I pictured the delight Opal would have felt in such a book as "The Story of Jesus", and wished with all my heart that the little books passed on to her "Angel Father and Mother" had contained fewer names and dates of births and deaths. There is a touch of infinite pathos about those little books and their effect upon the little girl in the Oregon woods who cherished their contents so tenderly. It was in them, as well as in nature and in her own thoughts, that the gracious personalities of both father and mother still lived for her; and all the strange, faraway names and allusions were a part of that home longing of the spirit which pervades the journal. "Day by day," says Opal, "I spelled over and over the many words that were written in them. From them I selected names for my pets. And it was the many little things recorded there that helped me to remember what my mother and father had already told me of different great lives and their work; and these books with these records made me very eager to be learning more and more of what was recorded in them. These two books I studied much more than I did my books at school. Their influence upon my life has been great."

I find that many hasty readers of "The Story of Opal" fail to give the little books their true place and significance in her strange environment, and look upon the literary and historical allusions she brought from them as far-fetched and unnatural for a child. To those who are bored by "The Story of Opal"—and many people are bored by it—I have only this to say: leave it alone unless you can approach it in a mood born of some close and vivid association with childhood, and then do not read too much at a time. The truest thing about the journal to my own mind is its truth of emotion—it is the absolute record of a child's emotion, whether roused by the thrill nature gives her, by the hunger, the birth, or the death of a pet, or by the understanding love of a human friend. "She was a queer girl," said a child of nine who had been reading the story aloud to her mother as it appeared in "The Atlantic"; "she was a queer girl to *write down* everything she thought. Why did she do it?" Why, indeed! Had this journal come to us from France, Russia, or Serbia it would have seemed less strange. We think we know about what to expect of the children of America or of England. But how little we really do know!

Will children read "The Story of Opal"? The children of many of the parents who read "The Atlantic" have read it already and some of them I know have taken it into their spon-

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taneous play out of doors. But the book in its present form is not attractive to children. The photographic illustrations may answer some of the questions of the curious but they detract from one's pleasure in the story itself. I am inclined to place copies of the book in our children's library reading-rooms just as we placed copies of Hilda Conkling's "Poems", to find out what appeal the book makes to children. After five months of such invitation to read Hilda Conkling's "Poems" in its present form, I feel reasonably certain the poems, childlike and appealing as they are, will not be much read by children until a children's edition is available. Should the interest expressed by any considerable number of children justify it, I think a very charming children's book could be made of "The Story of Opal", but it calls for an artist with imagination and parts. The author is so graphic that her inimitable pictures of Solomon Grundy, William Shakespeare, Sadie McKibben, Jenny Strong, with the nodding rose on her bonnet, "the man who wears gray neckties and is kind to mice", and all the rest, must be given back to the very life in line drawings executed with equal delicacy and humor.

Ellery Sedgwick, in his introduction, says:

> If the story of Opal were written by another hand than her own, the central theme of it would be faith. No matter how doubtful the enterprise, the issue she always holds as certain.... She is the child of curious and interesting circumstance, but of circumstance her journal is altogether independent. The authorship does not matter nor the life from which it came. There the book is. Nothing else is like it nor apt to be. If there is alchemy in Nature, it is in children's hearts the unspoiled treasure lies, and for that room of the treasure house the "Story of Opal" offers a tiny golden key.

"The Treasure of the Isle of Mist" is an exquisite fantasy of youth and autumn, "a fairy tale for my daughter", says the author; and when one has read it one feels certain that Fiona, the long-legged creature of fifteen with the warm heart and the "longish size in shoes", is the veritable daughter of W. W. Tarn, who lives in the Highlands of Scotland. "To most people there is some corner of the earth which means more than all others", and to Fiona is given the gift of the search for her own treasure—the spirit of the island she loves. "There are no short cuts to Fairyland," she is told; and she does not reach the Fairy World till Hallowe'en, although the old hawker starts her off in September.

"How shall I know where to begin? And may I take the Urchin with me?" Fiona wants to know, like many another girl of fifteen. "Whether you can take the Urchin with you depends on his capacity to go," says the old man. "And as to beginning I think you will find that the Search will begin itself, independently of you. It always does." The Urchin (who is a real boy) goes along, but vanishes after exciting adventures in a haunted sea cave where he insists upon searching for his own treasure. "Carried off by the fairies," Fiona tells her father, and straightway climbs old Heleval on the morning of October first to find a way of bringing him back. All the beauty of the autumn is in these descriptions of the Oread of the mountain-top, the King of the woodcock, and the fairy ring. As for the Fairy World—Fiona enters it at last and finds such a gathering as she had never dreamed of. "All the lost peoples and nations and languages were there in miniature; every one that Fiona had ever heard her father speak of and many another of which he knew nothing." I am not surprised to learn that

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"The Treasure of the Isle of Mist" is the work of a distinguished scholar—an authority on the third century B.C., and the author of a learned history published in 1913. "Hardly a writer for children," I am reminded by someone who forgets about Charles Perrault, Lewis Carroll, and the Grimms, and who has yet to make the acquaintance of Mr. Tarn's "King's Remembrancer—those two with the books". "Why are there two?" Fiona asks the Leprachaun. "One to remember and one to forget, of course, stupid. Wherever were you educated? Do you think kings want to remember *everything?*" "It must be very easy forgetting," said Fiona. "Hardest job in Fairyland," said the Leprachaun.

Since ever and ever the world began
They have danced like a ribbon of flame,
They have sung their song through the centuries long
And yet it is never the same.
And though you be foolish or though you be wise,
With hair of silver or gold,
You could never be young as the fairies are,
And never as old.

It is Rose Fyleman who reminds us that "The Fairies Have Never a Penny to Spend." Her charming verses "Yesterday in Oxford Street", "White Magic", "A Fairy Went a-Marketing", which first appeared in "Punch", now collected under the fascinating title of "Fairies and Chimneys", make just the book to take up after leaving Fiona and the Student.

It is from the work of a distinguished oriental scholar, who has also the gift of telling stories, Professor Rhys Davids, that Marie Shedlock has made her discriminating and valuable selection of stories included in "Eastern Stories and Legends". The story of "The Hare That Ran Away", which has been completely adapted and rewritten by Miss Shedlock, is often told by her in connection with Hans Andersen's "Scandal in the Poultry Yard"—"the first story being simple and direct", she says, "the second veiled in gentle satire." Phrases out of "The Monkey and the Crocodile", one of the most spirited and humorous of the stories of this collection, still lingered in my memory as I picked up the galley proofs of "The Story of Dr. Dolittle", the most delightful nonsense story of the year, with its delectable line drawings of Dr. Dolittle and his sister Sarah, the King of Polynesia and his son Prince Bumpo, the bridge of apes in the jungle, the leader of the lions, and all the rest. The author, Hugh Lofting, who is also the illustrator, must have first told the tale to pictures drawn for his own small boy. Dr. Dolittle gives up a practice among "the best people" of Puddleby-on-Marsh to become an animal doctor. His fame goes far and wide and he is sent for to cure an epidemic among the monkeys of Africa. Of course, he had to go. Monkeys have such a lot of sense. "O silly Crocodile!" said the monkey of that remembered eastern story from the Pali, "you thought that there were creatures that kept their hearts hanging in a tree-top!... Your body is great but you have no sense." (The Crocodile's mate had wanted the monkey's heart to eat.) Of the sense and gratitude of monkeys you may learn from Dr. Dolittle, for whom they captured and to whom they gave that rare, shy, two-headed animal the pushmi-pullyu. Any father with a sense of nonsense and love of animal and humankind will enjoy reading "Dr. Dolittle" aloud. I fancy it will be found as often in the hands of big boys as little ones, since it is the real thing in the way of a "funny book".

Humor is not wanting in the new series of histories for children by Hen-

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drik Willem Van Loon, whose "Short History of Discovery" is now well known. The dummy of the first volume, "Ancient Man", contains end papers picturing the beginnings of civilization in a thoroughly ingenious manner. The text is terse, up to date, and thoroughly interesting. "It took Columbus more than four weeks to sail from Spain to the West Indian Islands. We, on the other hand, cross the ocean in sixteen hours in a flying machine." Such a series of books as this promises to be is needed to give life and color to books of history and travel for children. E. Boyd Smith has written and illustrated "The Story of Our Country".

Of all the books relating to the Pilgrims, "The Argonauts of Faith" by Basil Mathews has the best dramatic form and the most suggestive content for the story-teller, teacher, or librarian. Such chapter headings as "On the Great North Road", "The House With the Green Door", "The Ship of Adventure" are indicative of the romantic treatment of the author, who has held closely to historical records of facts. The book contains a foreword by Viscount Bryce, which relates to the Plymouth Pilgrims and the effect of their migration on England and America.

The reprinting of "An Island Story" and "An Empire Story" by H. E. Marshall is a welcome piece of news. Mary MacGregor's "The Story of France" is also available; and the large print English editions of "Ivanhoe", "The Talisman", and "Kenilworth" are to be had once more from an American publisher.

N. C. Wyeth has illustrated "The Courtship of Miles Standish", "Robinson Crusoe", and "Westward Ho!" but I have seen only the illustrations for "Robinson Crusoe", some of which represent his best work.

It is impossible, within the compass of this review, to do justice to a group of interesting collections of folk and fairy tales. "The Shoemaker's Apron" (a second volume of "Czecho-Slovak

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Marigold Garden. By Kate Greenaway. Frederick Warne and Co.

The Pied Piper. By Robert Browning. Illustrated by Kate Greenaway. Frederick Warne and Co.

Under the Window. By Kate Greenaway. Frederick Warne and Co.

L'Alsace Heureuse. By l'Oncle Hansi. Brentano's.

A B C. By Jules Le Maitre. Illustrated by Job. Brentano's.

The Story of Jesus. By Ethel N. Dana. Marshall Jones Co.

The Story of Opal. By Opal Whiteley. Atlantic Monthly Press.

Poems by a Little Girl. By Hilda Conkling. Frederick A. Stokes Co.

The Treasure of the Isle of Mist. By W. W. Tarn. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Fairies and Chimneys. By Rose Fyleman. George H. Doran Company.

Eastern Stories and Legends. By Marie L. Shedlock. E. P. Dutton and Co.

The Story of Dr. Dolittle. By Hugh Lofting. Frederick A. Stokes Co.

Ancient Man. By H. W. Van Loon. Boni and Liveright.

The Story of Our Country. By E. Boyd Smith. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Argonauts of Faith. By Basil Mathews. George H. Doran Company.

An Island Story. By H. E. Marshall. Frederick A. Stokes Co.

An Empire Story. H. E. Marshall. Frederick A. Stokes Co.

The Story of France. By Mary MacGregor. Frederick A. Stokes Co.

Ivanhoe. By Sir Walter Scott. Illustrated by Maurice Greiffenhagen. David McKay.

Kenilworth. By Sir Walter Scott. Illustrated by H. J. Ford. David McKay.

The Talisman. By Sir Walter Scott. Illustrated by S. H. Vedder. David McKay.

The Courtship of Miles Standish. By H. W. Longfellow. Illustrated by N. C. Wyeth. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Robinson Crusoe. By Daniel Defoe. Illustrated by N. C. Wyeth. Cosmopolitan Book Corp.

Westward Ho! By Charles Kingsley. Illustrated by N. C. Wyeth. Charles Scribner's Sons.

The Shoemaker's Apron. By Parker Fillmore. Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

The Whirling King. By Harriet Mead Olcott. Henry Holt and Co.

The Black Buccaneer. By Stephen W. Maeder. Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

The Blue Pearl. By Samuel Scoville, Jr. The Century Co.

The Apache Chief. By Everett T. Tomlinson. D. Appleton and Co.

In the Great Apache Forest. By J. W. Schultz. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Gus Harvey. By Captain C. L. Smith. Marshall Jones Co.

Jimmy Quigg. By H. S. Latham. The Macmillan Co.

Treasure Mountain. By Edna Turpin. The Century Co.

The Strange Year. By Eliza Orne White. Houghton Mifflin Co.

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Tales" by Parker Fillmore) and "The Whirling King" (adaptations from the "Tales of Madame d'Aulnoy", charmingly illustrated with silhouettes by Harriet Mead Olcott) stand out from the group at once by reason of the strong appeal of similar collections by these authors, who have done something more than to edit or translate the tales.

Of the new stories for boys, I have read with interest "The Black Buccaneer", by Stephen W. Maeder. It is the story of a boy carried off the Maine coast by pirates in the year 1718, and gives promise of good work from a new author. "The Blue Pearl" by Samuel Scoville, Jr., looks exciting and readable. The illustrations are by Charles Livingston Bull. Everett Tomlinson has written a tale of Geronimo called "The Apache Chief". James Willard Schultz's "In the Great Apache Forest" has already found many readers. "Gus Harvey, the Boy Skipper of Cape Ann", by Captain Charlton Lyman Smith, will give boys a genuine desire to know more about boats and how to sail them. There is a fascinating glossary of sea terms in the front of this book, and the story has the quality of an old skipper's talk. Harold Latham has written another story for boys. "Jimmy Quigg, Office Boy" is its title.

I am still looking hard for promising stories for girls. I have read Edna Turpin's "Treasure Mountain", an adventure story for girls, with pleasure, and I feel sure that girls will like it and take from it some genuine impressions of life in the Blue Ridge mountains. Eliza Orne White has written a sequel to "The Blue Aunt" called "The Strange Year". The holiday lists are sure to bring announcement of new stories and new collections of stories from which we may continue to select "More Books for the Home".

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A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

A QUINTET OF ESSAYISTS

By Katharine Fullerton Gerould

FIVE books are before me, three English and two American, all purporting to be essays. And so they are; yet one marvels at the elasticity of a genre which can include in its easy dominion Mr. Squire's brief paragraphs, Mr. Lucas's barely formulated flirtations with all and sundry, and Miss Repplier's pungent and ironic moralities. Mr. Mais and Miss Kirkland fall more conventionally into line.

The most significant of these volumes, though the least conforming in technique, is "Books in General" by J. C. Squire ("Solomon Eagle")—the second series, I believe. It makes one hunger and thirst after the first series, if one has not been lucky enough to see that. These essays—which are not essays, any more than a man three feet high is a man—are reprints of contributions to "The New Statesman". Evidently Mr. Squire was confronted with a definite and very small space to fill each week. Maupassant, I believe, had the same problem to solve. And as Maupassant evolved from his necessity the short story so short that it flouted the existing genre and by its perfection created a new one, so Mr. Squire has evolved from his journalistic habit a new vehicle for literary criticism. In other words, both gentlemen refused to be conquered by Procrustes. The point, with Mr. Squire, is that he manages to pack real substance into his two-page and three-page articles. We should like more—all he will give us—but we feel that he has given his subject a respectable if not an exhaustive treatment. These paragraphs are not ephemera; and considering their length, that is a triumph. It is equally a triumph that their brevity should never betray him into the pseudo-aphoristic manner of the late Lord Avebury.

Even more interesting than technical success, in this sort of thing, is the quality of mind we see at work. Mr. Squire has an admirable sanity. You do not need, for pleasure, to agree with a critic; you need only to respect his attitude. I disagree with him, even passionately, about Swinburne; but I am willing to read what he says about Swinburne or anyone else. And it should be set down here that Mr. Squire could evidently pass one of the best contemporary tests of literary "sanity": i. e., he gives signs of not having been duped by Lytton Strachey. Even the conscientious Mr. Mais has apparently been fooled by "Eminent Victorians", though he enters a feeble *caveat*. Probably, in common with his own little set of collaborators in "The London Mercury", Mr. Squire has been deceived about "The Dynasts"; but that is pardonable. To think "The Dynasts" the greatest modern verse is funny, if you like; but it is a matter of opinion, of taste. To think "Eminent Victori-

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ans" great biography is a matter not of taste but of standards. Those who think thus acknowledge themselves to be on the side of frivolity and patient of mendacity. I do not believe that Mr. Squire is either, though he has—like all of us—his little fads. To admire the Poet Laureate excessively is an amusing but perfectly respectable whim. It is like a preference for odd things to eat. Between liking bird's-nest soup and being a cannibal there is a difference not wholly of the palate. So let us give Mr. Squire his bird's-nest soup cheerfully. I doubt if he would give us our baked beans with equal cheerfulness —when he does refer to the American product it is not always with respect —but then let us admit that our country is too large not to serve, at this point or that, the interests of satire. And satire, too, is enjoyable from the right lips. "Signor Marinetti's Masterpiece", "Pidgin-English for Germans", "The Humours of Hymnology", "The Descendants of Shakespeare" are delightful. So is "Mr. Lloyd George as a Vers-Librist". My own favorite, for *multum in parvo*, is perhaps "One's Favorite Author Defined". Though the humanist in one leaps out to the veracity of "Fire and the Heart of Man".

Mr. Squire is now very busy, presumably, with "The London Mercury", which I take to be the organ of the set that prides itself on being "in the know" as to literary matters. Certainly if I wished to find out what is really chic at the moment in England, I should go to "The London Mercury". I do indeed go to it regularly for pure pleasure. The members of the group are not all so good as Mr. Squire, and there is danger, sometimes one feels, of their becoming "groovy"—turning into a mutual admiration society. We should not like, however, to do without them. Only ——. Does Procrustes get in his revenge, after all? Have the weekly contributions to "The New Statesman" perhaps prescribed Mr. Squire's genre more rigidly than he himself would like? I remember an admirable essay of his in the "Mercury" on English prose. But it was too long....

Mr. Mais's preface is disarming. He wrote during the war because he was debarred for physical reasons from doing anything more martial. Also he disclaims being a critic. "The art of criticism is not mine," he says. "All I have sought to do has been to convey some of the pleasure I have gained from desultory reading of all kinds during the last few years." You cannot quarrel with anyone so modest as that. When you add that he is apparently himself a schoolmaster, you forgive him ahead for taking certain young men too seriously—as, for example, Siegfried Sassoon and Robert Nichols. It is a schoolmaster's duty, as well as the one thing that saves him alive, to be always looking for swans among the goslings.

The most interesting part of Mr. Mais's "Books and Their Writers" is, to my mind, that devoted to novels and novelists—though I like the essays on Pearsall Smith's "Trivia" and on Lafcadio Hearn. Let us say at once that he does justice—in so far as justice can be done in sixteen large-printed pages—to Jane Austen. Why, with so vivid an appreciation of "the divine Jane's" manner and substance, he should have declined to rhapsody over the method of Dorothy Richardson, is not clear. Is it simply eupeptic criticism at its most eupeptic? Not so: for Mr. Mais really does not like everything. He invents non-existent virtues to ascribe to Miss Richardson;

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he speaks easily of Mr. Swinnerton's nine novels as "all masterpieces of style" (they really aren't, you know!); in his introduction he flings gorgeous adjectives at Hugh Walpole, who comes nearer deserving them; he speaks of the "surpassing genius" of Alec Waugh; and says that at moments "Gilbert Cannan's clear hard polished intellect" (God save the mark!) "seems to us the most desirable art in the world". We have a right to conclude that Mr. Mais is easily pleased. But in that case why does he not have even better words than he has for Compton Mackenzie and Stephen McKenna? Something is wrong here. I do not know "The Loom of Youth"; but I wonder—I cannot help wondering—about Alec Waugh's "surpassing genius" and the "insight" of the unknown Miss P. B. Stern. Mr. Mais considers J. C. Squire "perhaps the ablest literary critic alive". I wish he had chosen to discuss Mr. Squire's criticism rather than Mr. Squire's poetry, because then we should have been nearer grasping Mr. Mais's own standards. As it is, he leaves one perplexed. There is the essay on Jane: we must not forget it. But he does exalt Dorothy Richardson, who, unless she composes on a ouija-board, must, one would think, be trying to see how much she can "put over" on a gullible world. These are mysteries, of which I leave the solution to others.

What shall we say to E. V. Lucas? I think I have had as much pleasure from his work as one can have from anyone so prolific. But I have had more pleasure from some other things than from "Adventures and Enthusiasms". Do not mistake me: Mr. Lucas is always readable, always whimsical, always scenting out for us, in unknown or forgotten places, genuine if not perdurable delights. (Was it not Mr. Lucas who first discovered for most of us Giles's Chinese Biographical Dictionary?) We come, when we take up Mr. Lucas's volume, away from the essay in criticism to the causerie. Now we no longer compare a literary critic with Matthew Arnold—the literary radicals have to that extent had their way with us. But the causerie, in our modern strenuous days, has been let alone for the most part; so that we do still hark back to the great recognized masters thereof—to Leigh Hunt, to Hazlitt, and to Charles Lamb. This is hard on the writers of the causerie, for it sets the higher standard for the lighter art. But Mr. Lucas would be the first to admit that he challenges comparison with Lamb, and that the advantage is Lamb's. "Aunts", "Davy Jones", "The Perfect Guest"—these are subjects that call for Lamb's typical treatment. I do not know how Lamb worked; but I would swear he took more pains over his extravagances, sweated more over his whimsies, than Mr. Lucas has done. On the other hand, Mr. Lucas never bores us; we go on from little essay to little essay with pleasure, sure each time of a "find". It is a perverse objection I have to make: the objection that he does not sufficiently crystallize his delight and ours. I want the whimsy made more memorable; the enthusiasm immortalized in a phrase. If Mr. Lucas will not do this for us, no other living person will. For he alone, as far as I know, is in the Lamb tradition.

When we come to Miss Repplier's present volume, the horns of Elfland have ceased even faintly to blow. "Points of Friction" concerns itself not with imagination and fancy, not even (except for one essay) with literature, but with certain aspects of contempo-

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rary life. It is controversial: "Points of Friction" is accurate. Miss Repplier is, for the moment, about as irresponsible as John Bunyan. I find myself liking best the essay on "Dead Authors", because it gives us more of the humor we have come to look for in Miss Repplier's presentment of human error. But I confess myself at a disadvantage in dealing with her: I have almost never found myself failing to agree with her on any essential point, and my appreciation is apt to take the form of gratitude for the distinguished expression of what would seem to civilized people to be obvious. Her essays are usually, to me, what the brilliant elucidation of a text is to the orthodox congregation. Here, for example, she is right about living in history, right about money, right about the conservative. Where she strikes fire is where she tackles a new portent, or a contemporary mode: the Gospellers of Gladness, or books transmitted through mediums. It is for this kind of thing that we look to Miss Repplier and to her—in America, at present—alone. She is perfectly mistress of the moral essay. I know she would not mind my phrasing her genre thus, for she knows perfectly that almost everything in the last analysis is a moral matter.

I have left myself little space for Miss Kirkland's "The View Vertical"—an uneven volume, to my mind. I have noted with pleasure the rightness of "Faces in Fiction": the particular thing has never, so far as I know, been said so clearly and directly. But my delight is in "Hold Izzy", which suits me as catnip suits a cat.

Our three English and our two Americans are ill-sorted, because all are playing different games. Lucky reviewer, who does not therefore have to end with national comparisons! On the whole, I should say that we Americans must be a little humble when J. C. Squire is presented to us, though I think we can raise our heads when we send Miss Repplier back to our English cousins.

Books in General. (Second Series.) By Solomon Eagle. Alfred A. Knopf.
Books and Their Writers. By S. P. B. Mais. Dodd, Mead and Co.
Adventures and Enthusiasms. By E. V. Lucas. George H. Doran Company.
Points of Friction. By Agnes Repplier. Houghton Mifflin Co.
The View Vertical and Other Essays. By Winifred Kirkland. Houghton Mifflin Co.

A MISCELLANY OF POETRY

By Stark Young

IN this book ninety-four poems are brought together by eleven poets. They wisely disclaim any group idea or "movement". But "representing the best and most divergent qualities in our native poetry" these eleven "have joined in what is intended to be a biennial exhibition of independent personalities". These are the words, not without their shade of vulgarity, of the preface. The best and most divergent part of it is true, I think, of five poets out of the eleven. The biennial prospect is another matter.

If such a book appears at all, it ought to be one of two things. Either the poems should be taken from published or unpublished works alike and reprinted as the writer's best; or, if not that, the poet should save for the volume what he thinks is best and most characteristic of him. The present volume is neither one thing nor the other. Some of the poems have come out in magazines; and, what is really important, most of them are below the author's level. For a first number this volume might pass. But the next should be made to count by the con-

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tributors looking ahead and planning for it. Otherwise it is only a pleasant venture; and it might too easily be the mere enterprise of a publisher or of one organizing poet now while poetry sales or reputations are in the air.

The best points of the collection lie in the short poems like E. A. Robinson's "Dark Hills", unfortunately his only contribution. But in Conrad Aiken's lengthy First Movement from "The Pilgrimage of Festus" there are brief passages that rise into a sudden passionate movement and rich image of beauty something like D'Annunzio's. Fine rhythms these that pass easily into Miss Lowell's "Night Clouds", where the movement is more energetic and intellectualized, more of a vehicle for that sharp vignetting of hers and that rush of hers toward the captivity of her brittle thought and glittering details. "Granadilla" is a good example of that effect Miss Lowell sometimes gets of the translation of a far-off passionate poem, seen now strangely glowing and sometimes remotely beautiful, through the cold transparency of quiet words.

I remember with a sense of droll pathos, whimsical sentiment with its tongue in its cheek, and, long afterward, a shy, moving applicability to life, Robert Frost's poem to the young orchard, "Good-Bye and Keep Cold". (What a gift for titles he has!) Such a quality as this moves into the franker sentiment and more poignant feeling of Sara Teasdale's "Moonlight" and her fine poem on the closing water-lilies, with its shadows of mountains falling on the heart.

And after the technical joys and half self-conscious new ventures of this poet and that, comes Vachel Lindsay with a thing as lovely and old as the old songs in English and quite as new as any of our schools, the voice of the unquenchably fresh and happy heart in the life of poetry forever:

TO A GOLDEN HAIRED GIRL IN A LOIUSIANA TOWN

You are a sunrise,
If a star should rise instead of the sun.
You are a moonrise,
If a star should come in the place of the moon.
You are the Spring,
If a face should bloom,
Instead of an apple-bough.
You are my love
If your heart is as kind
As your young eyes now.

The longer poems I have read but without enthusiasm. They have spots, good quarters but bad half-hours. At the most the only compliment I can pay them would be what Rossini said of a certain opera: "It is the kind of thing doubtless that one has to see a number of times to appreciate. I shall not go again."

A Miscellany of American Poetry, 1920. Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

THE METABOLIST OF GENIUS

By Benjamin De Casseres

I MUST invent a word to invoke my dominant impression of James Gibbons Huneker as he surges and soars, bellows and laments through his two volumes of "Steeplejack",—being the intellectual, artistic, and emotional confessions of our foremost critic of the Seven Arts. He is a metabolist. He is a monstrous organism that has taken into its system and assimilated all the culture of the world. Through his rapid psychic and nervous metabolic processes he has shapen images of rare beauty. He has transformed dead theological tissue and atrophied epigrams into vital tissue. Whatever has passed through that sensibility with its tremendous vibrations, comes

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forth new and strange. His penholder is a veritable Aaron's rod—which, as you know, had a serpent twined around it. Metabolist of the arts and life—a Gargantua of books, music, drama, religions, and beers, he has in the fifty years' winter's and summer's tales in his book written the intellectual history of the times, not logically, historically, or pedantically (impossible!), but humanly, humorously, electrically. He is himself an Era.

His style is dithyrambic, telephonic, elliptical. A man sits in the tavern of his dreams and talks to you, talks as few have ever talked—talks in Rabelaisian guffaws, Chopinesque études, and to the rattle of the spheres. The style is the mood, and the mood is the man, and Huneker is all moods. A weathervane is his coat-of-arms. He flows, like life. He is impermanent, contradictory, paradoxical. His brain is a chameleon. "I am not what I am," he says with Othello. He has that unarithmetical humor which denies that anything is finally important—except God, in which he believes as profoundly as Lucifer, the most religious of all the Sons of Light.

You cannot "corner" this perpetual changeling. You cannot pin him to a system, a theory, a "message". He is of the flock of Epicurus and blood-relative of Montaigne, Poe, Remy de Gourmont, Flaubert, and Chopin. He says he is in his anecdotage, that he is a mediocrity, that he is a Jack of the Seven Arts and master of none. He pins proudly on his lapel, "Newspaper Man". But we who admire him demur. Yes, he is a master of one art. He is an Individualist, a Man to perfection. He is the ideal of a Fielding, a Nietzsche, a Whitman. He is *himself*—nothing rarer and nothing so far removed from mediocrity.

The discursiveness of his character is pictured in the many chapters devoted to his youth. He was lawyer's clerk, magician, a worker in overalls in the Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia (where he was born), and narrowly escaped, he says, the priesthood. He even thought of becoming a bartender, but John Masefield has the monopoly of that glory.

But it was Music, the ethereal vamp, that transfigured the road beset with pitfalls and with gin and made of it the miraculous Road to Damascus, where St. James saw the light that never was on sea or land and heard the thunder of the oratorios of the Archangels and the unearthly pizzicatos of the satanic hosts.

His chapters on the musical life of Philadelphia in the late 'seventies are rich with anecdote and portrait. There is a description of a row at old "Pop" Dunn's saloon early one Sunday morning between Max Heinrich and Carl Gertner over Bismarck, in which Heinrich, who hated the Prussians, brought Gertner to his knees and made him say, "To hell with Bismarck!" by drawing a gleaming weapon from his pocket—a metal shoe-buttoner. Magnificent rowdy days those, when young Bohemia in Philadelphia babbled stein-deep till dawn over horse-cars and Baudelaire, Rutherford B. Hayes and Franz Liszt, the tariff and "Tom" Carlyle.

His chapter on "My Friends the Jews" is a magnificent tribute of a Catholic to the unchosen race. "I have always", he says, "entertained a peculiar admiration for the Jews and Judaism.... My dearest friends have been, still are, of that race. Prejudice, social or political, against the Jew I not only detest but I have never been able to comprehend." He has played the organ in synagogues, and with a pride that is extraordinary in

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one not born to the tallith calls the rôle of the Jews famous in music, art, science, philosophy, and the stage—among them Richard Wagner. He even hints that Anatole France, Charles Lamb, and Cardinal Newman had "the precious quintessence" in their blood.

It was from Stephen Crane, while both were sitting in the dining-room of the old Everett House, that Mr. Huneker first heard the name of Joseph Conrad. Years later Mr. Huneker, while in England, received a "royal summons" to visit the author of "The Nigger of the Narcissus". The author of "Steeplejack" tells us all about it in one of the most remarkable chapters in the book. On one of his automobile trips with his guest Conrad wore a monocle—the triumph, momentarily, of Joseph Chamberlain over Kosciusko.

Whom has Mr. Huneker not met or whom has he not corresponded with? Duse and Roosevelt, Strindberg and George W. Wickersham, Milan of Serbia and Ibsen, Bernard Shaw and Homer Winslow, Jean de Reszké and Montague Glass, Louis James and Henry James, Remy de Gourmont and Theodore Thomas—his book is a mailing-list of celebrities. It is profusely illustrated with personal pictures of famous men and women and himself at all ages.

It is the romance of the year.

Steeplejack. By James Gibbons Huneker. Two volumes. Charles Scribner's Sons.

A LIFE OF ENJOYMENT AND ENDEAVOR

By Henry Litchfield West

ALL autobiographies, when written with sincerity, are something more than mere contributions to literature. They are the revelations of a soul. The memoirs of Mr. Mallock belong to this category. He has portrayed himself with an accuracy that leaves a distinct impression upon the mind.

Born with a silver spoon in his mouth, so to speak, he has seen the world from its brightest side. Birth and fortune gave him an entree into the most delightful social circles, so that a very large portion of his life has been spent as a welcome guest in the most luxurious homes. Fortuitous circumstance led him to know men and women who were worth while—Swinburne, who recited his own poetry as he walked up and down the room; Ruskin, remembered for "the irresistible fascination of his manner"; Ouida, who "lived largely in a world of her own creation"; Cardinal Manning, "a figure slight, emaciated, and ...a face the delicate sternness of which was like semi-transparent ivory"; and many others. The personnel of all that was best in London society during the last fifty years moves through his pages in delightful fashion.

Mr. Mallock might have been a dilettante, but the fact is that his career has been a unique combination of social enjoyment and earnest endeavor. Something, which for the want of a better name may be called conscience, has impelled him to study the needs and aspirations of a humanity environed by conditions directly contrasted to his own. It is the narration of this development of his mind, this introspective treatment of his own work, which gives the book a real value. He has sought, as is well known, to suggest the general terms on which the ideals of a true Conservatism may be harmonized with those of an enlightened Socialism and

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he has always been a staunch upholder of the value of religious belief; and in this book he lays bare the motives which inspired "The New Republic", "Is Life Worth Living?", "A Critical Examination of Socialism", and other sociological and economic studies, as well as his many novels. It is through this presentation that one is made to realize the seriousness which underlies his work and is able to follow his definite mental progress. Because his writings have always had a certain aim he expresses, in the concluding chapter, a contempt for literature that is not synonymous with action—in other words, literature that does not seek to produce results. This, of course, is his personal view. It could not be accepted as a general rule, as otherwise it would exclude all literature which is beauty and not utility and which, like the flower in the field, adds to the sum of human enjoyment by the mere fact of its existence.

These memoirs are a fitting climax to a career of remarkable interest.

Memoirs of Life and Literature. By W. H. Mallock. Harper and Bros.

AN INSIGHT INTO MEXICO

By Chester A. Crowell

THIS is the most delightful of Edith O'Shaughnessy's books. With the certain touch of one who knows her subject perfectly, she skips from paragraphs analytical to paragraphs descriptive. Too clever to label her book with a ponderous and uninviting title, she none the less explains what is the matter with Mexico, and thus finds it unnecessary to suggest solutions of our Mexican problem. They suggest themselves.

One of the chief obstacles to an understanding of the Mexican problem by Americans is the imposing array of books and articles on Mexico. Men have attacked the Mexican problem, not with a view to discovering facts but with the purpose of elucidating theories. Those of a socialistic turn of mind have sought to use Mexico as "Exhibit A". Others have advanced the theory that Mexico must be ruled by a bloody tyrant. With light-hearted simplicity they have assumed that Porfirio Diaz was a bloody tyrant. Still others have assumed that the Mexican problem is simply an alternative between armed intervention and abandonment of American interests in Mexico. Mrs. O'Shaughnessy takes up Mexico not as a problem but as a tremendously human, interesting subject. Whatever she has to say on the subject of the Mexican problem is incidental. She tells you about Mexico and the Mexicans, and does not conclude with a peroration of stilted advice. The reader who really knows Mexico will enjoy this book more than anyone else, because such readers have, during recent years, usually read one chapter and then hurled offending volumes out of the window.

The author of this very entertaining book violates all tradition by recounting the story of the storming of Puebla and the pardoning of three hundred prisoners by General Diaz; the accepted theory being that General Diaz always waded in the gore of his enemies and never pardoned anyone. She violates tradition again when she tells of the two hundred and thirty-two relatives of President Francisco I. Madero with fists always eagerly extended toward the national treasury. She saw Madero as a dreaming idealist, who promised the impossible while a horde of petty grafters followed in his wake like a swarm of lo-

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custs devouring the substance of the nation. To her, General Diaz was not a remote historic figure but a man of flesh and blood with whom she talked. She tells of his happy family life, of his personal characteristics, chief among which was his lack of interest in personal possessions. He lived and died a poor man.

To the person who is struggling to understand the real Mexico and the real Mexican, chapter nineteen of Mrs. O'Shaughnessy's book is vital. In it she describes that peculiar fatalism of the Mexican, which enables him to face cruel misfortune, poverty, and the firing squad with untroubled spirit. She very truthfully says that the Mexican may not know how to live well, but apparently all of them know how to die. Until one understands what she has set forth so excellently in the chapter referred to, many events in Mexican history must remain a complete mystery to the foreigner.

"President Wilson had in his mind a purely mythological Mexico," she says. So indeed have most of those who have written about Mexico or added to the troubles of that unhappy people while trying to assist them.

This book deserves the place of honor among books dealing with Mexico. It is written by one who knows the language of the country, knows the persons about whom she writes, was present at the time history was made, and who tells her story without trying to prove or disprove anything. In these days when so many persons wish to make over the world, it is refreshing to find a subject studied by someone with both feet on the ground —someone who realizes that beautiful dreams are no better than basest demagogery when they ignore fundamental facts.

Intimate Pages of Mexican History. By Edith O'Shaughnessy. George H. Doran Company.

MODUS EXEUNDI

BY ADELE L. DE LEEUW

I WANT to go—
Not like a fire, with ever-duller glow,
Till no one watches for the last, faint spark—
But rather like a quickly snuffed-out flame,
My little world all calling out my name—
There in the dark.

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SOME TABLOID REVIEWS

EVERYDAY AMERICANS, by Henry Seidel Canby (Century).

If Mr. Canby's book had been written long ago it would have remedied in large degree the appalling ignorance existing abroad concerning American mind and thought. It should be translated and given a wide foreign circulation because it is a remarkable portrayal of the composite American mentality, and clearly and intelligently analyzes our complicated social fabric. The European and the Asian have failed to understand us and this misunderstanding has hurt us; today we are not understood and loved as would be the case if we had been better known. Mr. Canby, for instance, emphasizes a condition that has always puzzled foreigners, viz., that our apparent quickness to change everything at top speed extends only to the details; that the fundamentals, the foundations of our system, are sacredly preserved. It is only the methods that are new. Not only by foreigners but by everyone who is interested in America and the Americans should this book be read, for Dr. Canby has condensed into two hundred thoughtful pages a fund of valuable observation.

POTTERISM, by Rose Macaulay (Boni and Liveright).

A novel used as the vehicle of an idea seldom makes such exciting reading as this—here is a conflagration of ideas. The book arraigns all followers after the fleshpots—in the press primarily, in the pulpit and family—as Potterites. The greatest Potter of them all is the head of the many-tentacled Potter press; the power behind the throne Mrs. Potter, a popular novelist who rises triumphant over the realities of life, feeling "no call to be indecent"; the complicating force Jane, intellectually non-Potterite but a chip of the old block, wishing to eat her cake and have it too. Potterism, according to Miss Macaulay, is a complex, on its intellectual side, of sentimentalism, cloudy thinking, mediocrity, humbug, ignorance, prejudice, the handling of truth as one would handle nitro-glycerine. On its moral side its issue is profiteering, exploitation, and marketing of talent.

Even to a confirmed Potterite the keen thrust of Miss Macaulay's wit must afford a fearful delight. Here is a good antidote for the oversexed novel. If "being in love is a 'kink' ", as the anti-Potterite hero says, then that tangle of emotions and perceptions rightly has no place with the author's thesis. The tragi-farcical plot and marionette action out-Potter even approved Potterish melodrama in this joyous satire.

FROM PERSIAN UPLANDS, by F. Hale (Dutton).

Old-fashioned, calmly commentative, are the letters of Mr. Hale, and delightful as well. He is, or was, a British consul in Persia before and

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during the war, and some of his letters deal with the siege of Bagdad. His comment on current topics, on races and peoples, hunting and travel, politics and customs, is extremely diverting, always in good taste, and enlivened with a dash of humor reminiscent of Howells. There is little new in the way of information, nor could there be, since Persia has been described from every angle. It is the charming style and manner which make the book worth while.

THE STRANGENESS OF NOEL CARTON, by Willam Caine (Putnam).

Novelty is the chief qualification of this book, which takes the reader behind the scenes, as it were, and shows him how 'twas done. As the author of the book, as well as the author about whom he writes, became considerably involved in their respective efforts, "strangeness" is an appropriate description. Mr. Caine's idea of halting after each chapter to describe what his author hero has written and what he is about to write, is something new in literature. Just when it begins to become tiresome, Mr. Caine's author hero allows his leading character to become so linked with his own life that he not only starts writing the novel-within-a-novel in the first person but apparently meets in real life the characters who were figments of his imagination. When Carton and his imaginary characters seem to trade places, the action grows more intricate until the author (Mr. Caine this time) is finally forced to end the matter by —but never mind how! The ending is startling and yet not entirely unexpected. In a unique combination of diary and straight novelistic construction, Mr. Caine has done something for the novel which one Reizenstein once did for the stage in "On Trial"—he has found a new form.

THE ART OF BIOGRAPHY, by William Roscoe Thayer (Scribner).

This book presents the text of three lectures delivered by the author at the University of Virginia under the auspices of the Foundation established by Mrs. Thomas Nelson Page. As the writer of the biographies of Cavour and John Hay, Mr. Thayer was fully equipped with ability and experience to adequately present his subject, and the little volume will be read with keen interest by all who delight in biographical literature. Mr. Thayer's work evidences a wide range of reading and his critical faculty gives especial value to his comment. He believes biography to be on the threshold of a Golden Age. "Its outlook", he says, "was never brighter. Its votaries will practise it with a constantly increasing skill. The demand for veracity will not slacken. The public, grown more discerning, will read it with greater relish. And I think we may predict that the general average of biographical writing will be higher than it has been, though the number of master biographers, like that of master portrait painters, can never be large, hardly more than two or three in a century."

THE THREAD OF FLAME, by Basil King (Harper).

Mr. King has marred what might have been a wonderful story and one more in keeping with his theme, the telepathy of hearts, by reuniting the hero to his wife. Not that this consummation is not thoroughly proper, but because Vio does not seem worthy, as the author has portrayed her, or even interesting enough to gain the sympathy of the reader. Mr. King's style is a delight

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and his narrative related with spirit; only his dénouement of a reconciliation with a colorless wife seems to be an error. Followed to an apparently legitimate conclusion, the strongly drawn character of Harrowby would have been better off if he had not been taken back by his wife but had married the girl he met on shipboard. She was the one who attracted him; he attracted her; and both would have done the world good. It really does not matter what becomes of Vio. Harrowby is a man, she is a lay figure. One can scarcely imagine her as a compelling flame.

A GARDEN OF PEACE, by F. Frankfort Moore (Doran).

The undergrad of a decade or so ago who, conning Goldsmith and eternally avid of romance, read "The Jessamy Bride" for its story of "Noll's" mysterious love affair, will find in "A Garden of Peace" a further record of Mr. Moore's literary hobbies. This latest addition to Mr. Moore's more than five-foot shelf of romance, drama, adventure story, and verse, is really not any more about a garden than "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" is about the menu; and it is a battlefield of Platonic dialogue somewhat after the same fashion. It is, appropriately enough, autobiographical in nature and, as such, claims indulgence for its wide variety of content. An experience and a temperament of unusual interest underlies and informs it. Mr. Moore, Cornelia-like, naively exploits his treasures—wife, children, and garden; and deftly weaves together the contents of a note-book of an extraordinary lifetime. Personal reminiscence and gossip reaching over a half-century; shrewd criticism and philosophy on a hundred subjects, make up a running commentary pleasant to read. Like the famous after-dinner speaker that he is, Mr. Moore has put his medley tactfully together, and when in doubt he tells a funny story.

HISPANIC ANTHOLOGY, Poems Translated from the Spanish by English and North American Poets (Putnam).

The compilation of this anthology, as well as the bulk of the translations, is the work of Dr. Thomas Walsh; the book, provided with a number of illustrations difficult to procure, succeeds in compressing into a most convenient size almost eight hundred pages of Spanish and Portuguese poetry written on both sides of the Atlantic from the romantic days of the Cid down to the heyday of rampant poetic modernism in Spanish America. Though the volume may not be said to be thoroughly representative of the vast field it had to cover, the fault does not lie with the compiler, who could choose for inclusion only such poems as had already been put into English. With the material at hand he has produced a creditable collection that should be at the elbow of every Hispanic student; it is further enriched by succinct notes upon contemporary figures as yet little known. Later editions may easily introduce a few minor corrections that will make the book even more valuable. For example, the Brazilian poet Machado de Assis unquestionably deserves representation, no matter how restricted the selections may be; Blanco-Fombona was born, not in 1868 but in 1874; and more secular poetry might well have been presented.

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LOOKING AHEAD WITH THE PUBLISHERS

OF all that has been written of the late Empress Eugénie the work of Agnes Carey is without doubt the most interesting. Mrs. Carey was a member of the Empress's household for nearly the whole of the year 1886, as a guest and companion for Eugénie's two Spanish nieces. It certainly was a wonderful opportunity for an English girl to study the exiled Empress, and one of which Mrs. Carey took full advantage. For besides a voluminous journal the energetic young woman wrote daily letters to her grandmother, letters into which she put everything of interest. Later the whole was assembled into book form and will soon be published by the Century Company under the title of "Empress Eugénie in Exile".

Out of the daily record of those months at Farnborough rises an intimate picture: Eugénie, an empress who had lost an empire, a wife who had lost a husband, a mother who had lost her son; yet withal a woman who had kept through crushing sorrow the sweetness and dignity, the courage and personal magnetism which were hers at the height of her career. During the quiet days at Farnborough she told piecemeal the story of her remarkable experiences from the time of her marriage to Napoleon to her flight across the channel. Many of the episodes she recounted over her knitting are filled with the drama of a changing order,—tales of the lonely nights spent in studying the ominous secret police reports, of the Czar of Russia's narrow escape from death, of her secret visit to the imprisoned Marie Antoinette, of the Royal Family's mad flight across the fields to the sea,—unbelievable adventures that stand out in vivid contrast to the grey hair and quiet voice of the speaker. A worthwhile volume, surely, and Mrs. Carey has lost none of the spontaneity of the story in the retelling.

* * * *

The English are noted for their reserve. It is one of the bulwarks of the Empire, like the Fleet and Sir Thomas Lipton's beverage. And when, as occasionally happens, the barrier is let down, a veritable holocaust follows.

Margot Asquith, wife of the ex-Prime Minister, has written an autobiography whose charm lies in its utter frankness. And English society to a man (and a woman) is absorbed in its revelations, suffering silently at various passages and chortling with joy over others.

Margot Asquith, daughter of the late Sir Charles Tennant, has from her girlhood been famous for her unconventional ways, her independent judgment, and her candor. Indeed, of late years any action tending toward the unconventional has been nicknamed "Margotry" in London. Yet there is nothing ridiculous about "The Autobiography of Margot Asquith" (Doran). If her book is startling at least it is the truth which startles. And her judgment, her opinions, are

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clear and much to the point. She had an opportunity vouchsafed few, to write frankly and intimately of the famous men and women of her time. She made the most of that opportunity. Some of her happiest memories are of Gladstone and Jowett, whose regard and admiration for Margot Tennant were as deep and sincere as hers for them, as is shown in the letters of both these intellectual giants and in the playful, graceful verses which Mr. Gladstone addressed to her.

There are frank, graphic sketches of the members of her family, of King Edward VII as Prince of Wales and King, of Queen Alexandra, of Lord and Lady Randolph Churchill, the Duke of Beaufort, Arthur Walter of the "Times", Chamberlain, Lord Rosebery, Mr. Balfour, Huxley, Bowen, Sir Charles Dilke, Salisbury, Coquelin, Kate Vaughan, Harcourt, Campbell-Bannerman, Lord Curzon, George Wyndham, Alfred Lyttleton, John Addington Symonds, Meredith, Lord Morley, and many another touched in by turns with sympathy, humor, mordant wit, and always with a swift and shrewd analytical power. But she is not more unflatteringly truthful in presenting these portraits than in drawing her own: among the cleverest things in the book are Mrs. Asquith's character studies of herself.

Intermingled, as a sort of spicy seasoning, are sketches of men who made love to her, opinions of personal and political opponents, adventures in the hunting-field, amusing anecdotes and pungent epigrams.

Mrs. Asquith's memories are most satisfying. Together with the wealth of photographs, and pen sketches by the author and others, it deserves, beyond the limelight of the moment, a lasting place in literature.

* * * *

Children's Book Week, that very important campaign for an extension of the field of young people's reading, will be suitably ushered in by the publication of a number of juvenile books. Among them are two to which my particular attention has been called, both having to do with historical and legendary heroes.

The first, by no less a personage than the author of "Ben, the Battle Horse", Walter A. Dyer, is the story of Paul Revere. Mr. Dyer became interested in Revere's history through his own very great interest in antiques. After spending a very considerable amount of time and trouble in tracing that Revolutionary hero's life, he made some very illuminating discoveries. And on the framework of those discoveries he has built a story which, historically accurate, outstrips many products of the imagination in wealth of romance and stirring adventure.

Paul Revere's ride was only an episode in his career, it seems, for he organized the "Sons of Liberty" and was one of the uninvited guests of the Tea Party. He was by occupation a maker of false teeth, but during the Revolution printed the money and made the powder for the Continental Army. Altogether a fine story and admirable for young people. It is history, too, in a new and delightful form, which leads me to wonder what it was they tried to teach me back at school. Chronological tables, as I recall, the event always subordinated to the date of its occurrence.

"Sons of Liberty" will be published late in October by Henry Holt and Company.

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Clayton Edwards is publishing through Frederick A. Stokes Company a "Treasury of Heroes and Heroines"

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which includes not only a large number of famous people of history but many of legend as well. From Dante to Napoleon, from Lincoln to Buddha, from Henry Hudson and Columbus to Jeanne d'Arc, from Alfred the Great to Roosevelt and Edith Cavell, the book teems with information and adventure. It is well written, too, naturally and without that feeling of mental superiority which so often lurks behind an adult's attempt to "write down" to his juvenile audience. The illustrations, in color, are too young for the text, and lack the depth and beauty which characterize the work of Edmund Dulac, N. C. Wyeth, and Jessie Willcox Smith.

* * * *

Just as spiritualism obsessed the literature of England at the war's close, so now divorce furnishes the motif. It seems to have taken complete possession of the public's interest. Besides a mass of minor productions I have in mind two notable examples, "For Better, For Worse" by W. B. Maxwell, and "In Chancery" by John Galsworthy. (The former was reviewed in the October BOOKMAN.)

Galsworthy's is of course a most finished piece of work. Few writers have the power, as has he, to present characters in such an amazingly personal way. In this particular instance I feel that I know the Forsytes—three generations of them, in fact, and a large family too—more intimately than I do my own most real and numerous relatives. From gaunt old James with his eternal "I can't tell; I don't know; I knew how it would be" to the growing grandchildren of that instinctively "possessive" family, they follow their brief destiny through the ink of the author's pen. And much of the charm of the book lies in the completeness of the story, the history of the whole family who carry on the well-remembered characteristics of "The Man of Property". "In Chancery" (Scribner) does not greatly resemble others of the late works of John Galsworthy, but its power, its intimate interpretation of character, and its polish place this book among the few worthwhile novels of the year.

* * * *

Dodd, Mead and Company are publishing this month a volume of yachting reminiscences by Lewis R. Freeman, under the title of "In the Tracks of the Trades". The exhaustively-told story of a private cruise to Honolulu, the Marquesas, and the Samoan Islands, this book is a shining example of the gulf which lies between mere sightseeing and real vagabonding. To the tourist, whether he travel by private yacht or over Cook's well-worn tour, impressions remain kaleidoscopic, the Singapore smells taking equal importance with a native feast on the beaches of Tahiti; your true vagabond discards the dross and retains that spiritual vision which lives forever.

Yachtsmen will read "In the Tracks of the Trades", for it is full of reefs and knots, logs and soundings. But for poor landsmen like myself there is more enjoyment in Safroni-Middleton's sketch of his aged crew's vain effort to rescue the ship's dog in a night of howling wind and white water, than in four hundred pages of ocean touring, be it ever so meticulously told.

—S. M. R.

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FICTION IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The following lists of books in demand in September in the public libraries of the United States have been compiled from reports made by two hundred representative libraries, in every section of the country and in cities of all sizes down to ten thousand population. The order of choice is as stated by the librarians.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1.	Kindred of the Dust	*Peter B. Kyne*	COSMOPOLITAN
2.	The Portygee	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON
3.	Harriet and the Piper	*Kathleen Norris*	DOUBLEDAY
4.	Mary Marie	*Eleanor H. Porter*	HOUGHTON
5.	The Devil's Paw	*E. Phillips Oppenheim*	LITTLE, BROWN
6.	The Thread of Flame	*Basil King*	HARPER

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1.	The Great Impersonation	*E. Phillips Oppenheim*	LITTLE, BROWN
2.	Mary Marie	*Eleanor H. Porter*	HOUGHTON
3.	Kindred of the Dust	*Peter B. Kyne*	COSMOPOLITAN
4.	The Thread of Flame	*Basil King*	HARPER
5.	The Portygee	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON
6.	Tidal Wave	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1.	Kindred of the Dust	*Peter B. Kyne*	COSMOPOLITAN
2.	The Lamp in the Desert	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM
3.	Tidal Wave	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM
4.	Mary Marie	*Eleanor H. Porter*	HOUGHTON
5.	The Prairie Mother	*Arthur Stringer*	BOBBS-MERRILL
6.	The Great Impersonation	*E. Phillips Oppenheim*	LITTLE, BROWN

SOUTH CENTRAL STATES

1.	The Valley of Silent Men	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN
2.	The Portygee	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON
3.	Mary Marie	*Eleanor H. Porter*	HOUGHTON
4.	When Love Flies Out o' the Window	*Leonard Merrick*	DUTTON
5.	The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse	*Vicente Blasco Ibáñez*	DUTTON
6.	The Lamp in the Desert	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM

WESTERN STATES

1.	Mary Marie	*Eleanor H. Porter*	HOUGHTON
2.	The Great Impersonation	*E. Phillips Oppenheim*	LITTLE, BROWN
3.	Kindred of the Dust	*Peter B. Kyne*	COSMOPOLITAN
4.	The Moon and Sixpence	*W. Somerset Maugham*	DORAN
5.	The Rescue	*Joseph Conrad*	DOUBLEDAY
6.	The River's End	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN

FOR THE WHOLE UNITED STATES

1.	Kindred of the Dust	*Peter B. Kyne*	COSMOPOLITAN
2.	The Portygee	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON
3.	Harriet and the Piper	*Kathleen Norris*	DOUBLEDAY
4.	Mary Marie	*Eleanor H. Porter*	HOUGHTON
5.	The Thread of Flame	*Basil King*	HARPER
6.	The Lamp in the Desert	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM

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GENERAL BOOKS IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The titles have been scored by the simple process of giving each a credit of six for each time it appears as first choice, and so down to a score of one for each time it appears in sixth place. The total score for each section and for the whole country determines the order of choice in the table herewith.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
2.	Now It Can Be Told	*Philip Gibbs*	HARPER
3.	Memoirs of the Empress Eugénie	*Comte Fleury*	APPLETON
4.	Vagabonding Through Changing Germany	*Harry A. Franck*	HARPER
5.	Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children	*Joseph Bucklin Bishop*	SCRIBNER
6.	"That Damn Y"	*Katherine Mayo*	HOUGHTON

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1.	Now It Can Be Told	*Philip Gibbs*	HARPER
2.	The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON
3.	The Life of Benjamin Disraeli	*Monypenny-Buckle*	MACMILLAN
4.	Abraham Lincoln	*Lord Charnwood*	HOLT
5.	An American Idyll	*Cornelia S. Parker*	ATLANTIC
6.	The War, the World and Wilson	*George Creel*	HARPER

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1.	Now It Can Be Told	*Philip Gibbs*	HARPER
2.	The Economic Consequences of the Peace	*John Maynard Keynes*	HARCOURT
3.	The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON
4.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
5.	Letters of Henry James	*Percy Lubbock*	SCRIBNER
6.	An American Idyll	*Cornelia S. Parker*	ATLANTIC

SOUTH CENTRAL STATES

1.	My Three Years in America	*Count Bernstorff*	SCRIBNER
2.	Cardinal Mercier's Own Story	*Cardinal Mercier*	DORAN
3.	Letters of Henry James	*Percy Lubbock*	SCRIBNER
4.	Now It Can Be Told	*Philip Gibbs*	HARPER
5.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
6.	An American Idyll	*Cornelia S. Parker*	ATLANTIC

WESTERN STATES

1.	Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children	*Joseph Bucklin Bishop*	SCRIBNER
2.	The War, the World and Wilson	*George Creel*	HARPER
3.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
4.	The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON
5.	Vagabonding Through Changing Germany	*Harry A. Franck*	HARPER
6.	The Economic Consequences of the Peace	*John Maynard Keynes*	HARCOURT

FOR THE WHOLE UNITED STATES

1.	Now It Can Be Told	*Philip Gibbs*	HARPER
2.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
3.	The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON
4.	Letters of Henry James	*Percy Lubbock*	SCRIBNER
5.	Vagabonding Through Changing Germany	*Harry A. Franck*	HARPER
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THE GOSSIP SHOP

It is merely an accidental coincidence which combines within this issue of THE BOOKMAN a discussion of the censorship question by George Haven Putnam and a critical consideration of the works of James Branch Cabell. The fact that Cabell and censorship go together is emphasized by the appearance of the report of the Emergency Committee on the subject of the attempted suppression of his novel, "Jurgen". The preponderance of sentiment expressed in the letters published in the report is naturally favorable to the book; but, after all, the case is still to be decided in the courts. It is interesting to note that both Major Putnam and the committee arrive at the same conclusion, for both agree that the law as written by Anthony Comstock and enforced by his successors should be amended.

Mr. Cabell views the whole question with philosophic indifference. "If 'Jurgen' contains the right constituents it will live", he says, "and if it lacks the stuff of longevity it will in due course die; either way, the outcome is, now, to be decided neither by me, nor by vice commissioners, nor even by a grand jury." This is the truth in a nutshell; and it is equally true, as Mr. Cabell states, that "we contend against well-meaning and courageous persons who fight for high aims". It is upon this foundation that the censors rest their case, all the time vehemently denying that they are either unfair or hypercritical. The agitation of the question will eventually result in the enactment of just and intelligent laws; and, in the meantime, we must put our faith in the common sense of courts and juries, trusting that they will happily differentiate between unwarranted suppression and a justifiable warfare upon pictures and books which are deliberately issued for prurient minds.

The readers of THE BOOKMAN must be interested in this important subject, and their suggestions concerning the best method of solving the problem would be welcome.

The Gossip Shop is inclined to believe that the world is not growing materialistic but poetic. At any rate, the amount of poetry received by THE BOOKMAN loads down the daily mail. A vast majority of the contributions are pathetic failures, lacking every element which a poem should possess. It is not that they are without rhyme, for in these days of free verse rhyme seems to be an unnecessary factor, but they are also without reason. There is plenty of afflatus but the divinity is lacking.

Nevertheless it is significant to note so many everyday persons struggling to express themselves in poetic form. Sentiment, apparently, is not dead. Sometimes the poems have genuine inspiration, are glowing with a live spark, and appeal to both the mind and the heart, demonstrating that out in the byways and the highways there are hearts touched with the gift of song.

The New York "Times" devotes several columns to a question and answer

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department in its literary supplement. Nine-tenths of the queries relate to poems. No matter how ancient or obscure the verse desired, a score of readers dig it out of a scrapbook or resurrect it from the recesses of memory. Around a luncheon table recently nearly every man had concealed in his pocketbook a clipping of newspaper verse. Surely there is much of the leaven of poetry in the lump of mankind.

Speaking of "Wildcat", Hugh Wiley's amusing book, "Lady Luck" is now to be found among the race-track entries. If Wildcat could only be in the saddle!

Every man's life is full of strange incidents, but an experience narrated by W. H. Mallock in his "Memoirs of Life and Literature" must be regarded as exceptional. Here was a man whose trend of thought ran to the discussion of grave sociological problems—witness "The New Republic", "Is Life Worth Living?", and "Social Equality"—seriously engaged for months in an effort to break the bank at Monte Carlo. Here is how it happened:

Mallock had a friend named Ernest Beckett, afterward the second Lord Grimthorpe. In an obviously excited state of mind, Mr. Beckett confided to the author that he had improved upon a "system" originally devised by Henry Labouchere and had been playing it with unbroken success. He wanted to form a combination of four players to make a fortune. Mr. Mallock agreed and the quartette, including Charles Edward Jerningham, was selected. They spent four months at Beckett's home in daily tests of the new scheme, playing four hours a day, and found it apparently infallible. Then they went to Monte Carlo, where for three weeks the whole thing went like clockwork. "We ground out our daily gains, a hundred pounds on an average", says Mr. Mallock, "as though they were coffee from a coffee mill." Then the "system" began to break down; and, finally, two of the party, not finding that they were winning as fast as they had hoped, lost their heads and began throwing money on the tables without any "system" at all. "The result", adds Mr. Mallock, "was that in less than a quarter of an hour every penny which they had brought with them had disappeared."

Romance is no respecter of persons. Simultaneously with the news of the addition of "The Seven Wives of Bluebeard and Other Marvellous Tales" to the uniform English edition of Anatole France's works, comes the announcement of the French writer's engagement, in his seventy-seventh year, to Mlle. Emma La Prevotto.

Reverend W. C. Clark of Sheffield, Alabama, writes to the Gossip Shop that while recently visiting in a home in north Georgia he became greatly interested in a rare old book. "The title page is gone," he writes, "so that the name of the book and author and the date have been lost; but there are not wanting evidences of ancient date, learned authorship and comprehensive range of subjects. It is about twelve inches long, eight inches in width, and five inches in thickness. It contains more than a thousand pages though they are not numbered. It is written in Latin and has the 'illuminated text' and double columns, with the old form of certain letters and handmade capitals. From writing on the fly-leaf, it appears to be a second edition and to have belonged to G. Zelotes

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Adams of Hartford, Connecticut, to Dr. George Block, and to J. Gamble. The backs are made of wood covered with leather, cloth, and paper."

The volume is divided into ten books and each book into numerous chapters. One inscription seems to assign its date to a period sometime before 1480 or it may be 1680. A written note in the volume says, "This book was published soon after printing was invented", so that the book is probably more than four hundred years old. Its several chapters treat of "Heavenly Elements", "Metals and Stones", "Plants", "Things that Fly", "Animals", "Man and his Members", "Visions and Dreams", "Customs and Laws", "Canons and Laws", "Builders and Buildings", "Human Acts and Customs". This list only presents the general topics, while in the several chapters are discussed many subordinate subjects, giving the impression that the book treats of nearly everything which has engaged the thought of man from the beginning of time.

Perhaps some reader of THE BOOKMAN can supply the full title, exact date, and correct name of this interesting old volume and of its author.

"Q" is compiling another anthology. "Ships and the Sea" will be made up of selections from Chaucer to the present time. His anthology "The Oxford Book of English Verse" continues to be one of the most widely read books of verse in English.

Harry A. Franck, the world's greatest hiker, once wrote a book, "Vagabonding Down the Andes", the record of a journey along the west coast of South America from Bogota to Buenos Aires. He returned by way of the east coast from Patagonia through Brazil to Venezuela, but the story of that remarkable trip was not put into book form because, with the beginning of the world war, Franck went to Plattsburg and later served in France until the armistice. Then he tramped through Germany and roamed through the West Indies, putting his experiences into book form. Now that he is home again he is preparing the data of his unrelated South American tour and the new book, illustrated with the author's own photographs, is soon to appear. Franck, by the way, is a most remarkable character. He was a professor of languages in the University of Michigan when he started on "A Vagabond Journey Around the World", with hardly a penny in his pocket, afterward narrating his travels in the most unique book of its kind ever printed. He has the wanderlust developed to the highest degree, a pair of eyes which sees everything, a memory which never fails him, and a facility of expression which gives his writing a delightful charm.

Irvin Cobb in his apprentice days of newspaper reporting sometimes allowed his native bias to deflect his story from the paths of realism. It is said that one of the wittiest things he ever wrote was about a woman splitting her husband's skull with an axe —not the first masterpiece destined for the wastepaper basket, and alas! not rescued for posterity.

John Burroughs, who passed his eighty-third birthday last April, is getting a good deal out of life at his midsummer home, Woodchuck Lodge, near Roxbury, in the Catskills. He makes and tends his own garden, shoots and traps woodchucks, writes for the magazines, lovingly observes the great outdoors on the farm where

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he began his observations as a small boy, and entertains the host of friends and automobile parties who have found their way to Woodchuck Lodge while touring the Catskills. During the past summer Mr. Burroughs was occupied with the proof of his latest book "Accepting the Universe", just published.

Dr. Clara Barrus, author of "Our Friend John Burroughs" (1914), has just finished another book: "John Burroughs: Boy and Man". As physician and biographer, Dr. Barrus has enjoyed exceptional opportunities for an authentic record of the veteran literary naturalist, and her readers will welcome this intimate portraiture of him.

Now and then an ancient epigram is traced to its source and is imbedded in a new book. In "A Garden of Peace", F. Frankfort Moore attributes to H. I. Byron, burlesque writer for the old London Gaiety Theatre, the familiar saying that a play is like a cigar: "If it is a good one, all your friends want a box; but if it is a bad one, no amount of puffing can make it draw." Mr. Byron, Mr. Moore and the epigram will now go down to posterity together.

When the Marquis de Bayros invites us, as a gentle and intelligent reader, to glance at several bookplates and find revealed therein the characters of their owners, he invests the bookplate with a new significance. The Gossip Shop has a bookplate and reads "The Bookplate Booklet", but never before did these insignia of ownership seem more than artistic substitutes for the written name. The Marquis, however, views his own creations in more serious fashion. He subjects the book-owner to cross-examination. "We must get to know each other and love each other before the drawing can be a good and suitable one," says the Marquis. "I chat with him, trying to draw out his character in conversation, and endeavoring to learn all of his inclinations and disinclinations, his wishes and his longings, just as a doctor tries to form a picture of his patient's health and mind by conversing with him."

Thus does the artist of the bookplate become the confidant of all, "from the love of a flower or book to the story of a broken heart or a secret and hidden vice which may verge on the border of a crime". There is some consolation in the assertion that "only the discerning reader may understand me", as otherwise there is no telling what might happen. It is possible that the Gossip Shop has a discerning mind; and with pardonable curiosity we await a leisure hour to be devoted to deciphering the mysteries concealed in the charming plates created by the Marquis when art and psychology are combined.

Edward Bok, in his recently published autobiography, tells a remarkably interesting story of the author of "Alice in Wonderland", from whom he sought a series of articles for "The Ladies' Home Journal". After great difficulty (for the author leads a secluded life at Oxford and rarely admits anyone into his confidence), Mr. Bok was introduced to Reverend Charles L. Dodgson, a tutor in mathematics!

"You are quite in error," said the mathematician, when Mr. Bok had stated his errand. "You are not speaking to the person you think you are addressing."

"Do I understand, Mr. Dodgson," exclaimed Mr. Bok, "that you are not

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'Lewis Carroll'; that you did not write 'Alice in Wonderland'?"

For an answer the tutor rose, went into another room, and returned with a book which he handed to Bok. "That is my book," he said simply. It was entitled "An Elementary Treatise on Determinants," by C. L. Dodgson. It was a copy of the book which he had sent to Queen Victoria when she requested a personal copy of the famous story.

"As I said in the beginning," continued Mr. Dodgson, "you are in error. You are not speaking to 'Lewis Carroll'."

And nothing that Mr. Bok could say or do, despite the fact that he expended two hours in the effort, could break down this reserve. In fact, Mr. Dodgson is not "Lewis Carroll" to anyone. He is extremely sensitive on this point and will not acknowledge his identity. He is in daily dread that some one will mention "Alice" in his presence.

Leon Bazalgette, noted French writer, and one of the leading European authorities on Whitman, has been hit very hard by the war. "Mr. Bazalgette told me last August in Paris", the Gossip Shop hears from John Black, just back from a visit to renew memories of two years ago when he was on the "Stars and Stripes" staff, "that four books of his—essays, Whitman papers, etc.—which went to the publisher in 1914, are still waiting publication! Much of Mr. Bazalgette's time at present is spent in trying to persuade his publishers that ruin and bankruptcy will not follow their issuance of the books. Paris is still in the grip of paper and labor troubles and the woes which have fallen to the lot of the Whitman specialist, are shared by numerous important French authors.

"Robert Nichols is yearning to come back to America. He told me, in the dark confidence of a sleeping compartment that we shared en route to Czecho-Slovakia, that no one danced like the American girls. Nichols returned home full of kind thoughts toward the United States. He was still in the enthusiastic stage when I met him, and would talk of America at the wink of an eye. His impressions had evidently been superlatively fine. He thinks highly of our architecture."

The new translation of Ovid's Metamorphoses by Brookes More, which is soon to appear, represents the work of nearly thirty years.

Further evidence that the origin of a book may be as fascinating as the book itself is shown in the letters of Edgar Lee Masters and Mrs. Douglas Robinson, sister of Theodore Roosevelt, regarding the story which Mr. Masters has written. The two, while lunching together, discussed the powers exercised over the minds of boys by Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer, Mrs. Robinson asserting that every boy had a period of being Tom Sawyer or Huck. She recalled that when she was a child her brother Theodore used to lead her brother, Elliott, and herself into the woods to play Indians. One stone with a stain upon it, which somehow or other associated itself with blood, is still indelibly impressed upon her memory.

Then Mr. Masters remembered two boys, Mitch Miller and Skeeters Kirby, who read "Tom Sawyer" and acted it out in their boyhood lives in a little Illinois town. "There", said Mrs. Robinson, "is your story!" So Mr. Masters, returning to Chicago, sat down at his desk to experiment with

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a new idea. "I wrote five thousand words before leaving my desk," he says, "and so, in two weeks, day by day, the story ran out of my pencil onto the paper."

It is now the pleasant duty of Mr. Masters to make Mitch Miller and Skeeters Kirby as immortal as the creations of Mark Twain.

The abstruse question which Boswell once upon a time used as conversational bait for Dr. Johnson, "How many angels could dance on the point of a needle?", is a small matter compared with the question with which William Bayard Hale wrestles in "The Story of a Style":—how many adjectives does Woodrow Wilson use? Mr. Hale has combed the centuries for data, and his statistics rival in ingenuity and novelty those problems propounded and solved in the old "Penny Magazine" of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge such as: "How many obelisks the size of Cleopatra's needle would need be balanced one upon the other to reach to the top of the dome of St. Paul's?" Or "How many papers of pins would you have to buy if you wanted to lay a train of them from London to Edinburgh?" For the accommodation of all ingenious persons, we quote Mr. Hale's conclusions which show the present Pateresque incumbent of the White House to be far from the line of "normalcy", adjectively speaking:

In Wilson the ratio is 1 pure verb to 30 adjectives; with Ruskin the ratio is 16 to 7; Carlyle 12 to 4; Macaulay 11 to 3; Poe 12 to 5; Shakespeare 14 to 9; Scott 11 to 8; Dickens 16 to 6; Hardy 14 to 1; Shaw 14 to 4; Clemens 13 to 3; Hewlett 13 to 3; Gibbon 9 to 8; Bazin 18 to 3; Sienkiewicz 11 to 1; Stendhal 15 to 2; Maeterlinck 10 to none; Rosseau 14 to 6; Amiel 9 to 7.

The net result of Mr. Hale's diligent search reminds one of the oft-repeated phrase in Goldberg's cartoons, "It doesn't mean anything". Perhaps, however, Mr. Hale desires to lead our minds away from the violence of partisan discussion into the realm of purer thought.

There is something novel in the offer recently made by an English literary magazine, of a prize of three books "for the best advice to young persons about to marry". It may be that booklovers are especially qualified to speak wisely on this all-important subject. At any rate, the man who won the three books delivered himself thusly:

TO YOUNG PERSONS ABOUT TO MARRY

To make your married life a success rely on common sense. Cupid is blind and wilful! Do not "strike an attitude" for you cannot maintain it, and with the disillusionment comes sorrow. Do not neglect one another. Be cheerful, everything has a humorous side; find it. Beware of trifles magnified into importance. "A soft answer turneth away wrath." No man can be a hero to his wife—but he can be a gentleman. Intimacy is no excuse for rudeness. Keep your intellect bright. Read Mr. Micawber's advice on expenditure, but buy books, pay the baker, and save a little.

The recently published biography of Adelina Patti has been followed with a life of Liza Lehmann, written by herself. No musical career, of course, can equal Patti's, but it is interesting to know that Jenny Lind, when she heard Lehmann sing during her childhood, wanted to be her teacher. It is not as a singer, however, that Mme. Lehmann is best known, but as a composer, for her musical setting of Omar Khayyam's verses under the title "In a Persian Garden" has a world-wide fame. Mme. Lehmann knew Liszt, Rubinstein, Clara Schumann, Verdi, and Brahms among musicians, and many other celebrities, including Browning and Du Maurier, and her reminiscences are most entertaining.

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Albert M. Brush—who is not, as his name would indicate, a painter, but a writer—sends the following to the Gossip Shop from his New York address:

Your paragraph on "A New Story of W. S. Gilbert" is amusing, following Mr. Bangs's article on old jokes.

Miss Agnes Repplier, among others, tells this same joke on Gilbert and I have seen it credited to others. It is also well known that the "certain actor" was the late Henry Beerbohm Tree. The remark was made to him personally and the two were always good friends.

Professor Raymond M. Weaver's article, "What Ails Pegasus?", in the September BOOKMAN, found an appreciative reader in M. J. Boissevain, who has written the Gossip Shop a vigorous communication on the letterhead of the Hotel Condado-Vanderbilt, San Juan, Porto Rico. Mr. Boissevain is glad to find "that at least one human being arises full-armed to attack our half-demented versifiers, the degenerators of American literature". He has no use whatever for "these mad men and women, these arch-fiends of real poetry, who should be placed under lock and key in a lunatic asylum all by themselves, so as not to insult the inmates of a regular asylum". And, further, he asserts that "John Masefield, Arthur Symons and Edwin Arlington Robinson are the only men who write poetry—poetry that is sincere, poetry that is filled with beauty, power and grace. It is to be hoped", he adds, "and even prayed for, that Europeans will judge the American poetry of today by the works these men have given and will continue to give us, and not by the diabolical trash of the really-to-be-pitied beings... who have not, and never will have, a spark of inspiration in them."

Mr. Boissevain's criticism of the article—that Professor Weaver did not make his attack strong enough—certainly does not apply to his own letter. The framers of free verse will never make a convert of him!

The name of Sylvia Hortense Bliss is not to be found in "Who's Who" nor does the Gossip Shop remember her in any list of authors.

And yet there has drifted into THE BOOKMAN a little volume, evidently printed at the author's own expense, entitled "Quests", which fully justifies its sub-title, "Poems in Prose". In its rich poetic beauty, its charm of expression, and its perfect imagery, it is like the Psalms and "The Song of Solomon". Take, for instance, these sentences of the foreword:

I will disclose to those who have not seen, the beauty of the world.

I will not strive to enhance the beauty by fine phrases, nor hide it under a covering of words.

I will stand aside that I may not be in the way of a tree and that my shadow may not fall upon a flower.

I will be silent while the thrush sings and the young leaves rustle in the wind.

I will hide my little light that men may not turn from the sunlight nor withdraw their gaze from the night sky.

I will be as one who stands humbly at the portal to give entrance to those who seek the beauty of the world.

I will open doors before you. You may pass through or turn away, as you will.

There are doors that I will open that will never close. You will see the open doors and before you are aware you will have passed through.

It is evident that hidden away in Plainfield, Vermont, a real poet dwells.

Despite all that has been written and published, it was not the late William Marion Reedy who discovered Fannie Hurst. The credit belongs to Robert H. Davis, the well-known editor of the Munsey publications. The authority for this statement is Fannie Hurst herself—and surely no one can have more authentic information. It was "Bob" Davis who said to her,

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after she had been peddling manuscripts for twenty-six months without one acceptance or word of encouragement, "Fannie Hurst, you can write".

And then, she says, came the deluge.

There is no artificial barrier between a statesman and a poet, despite the fact that someone once declared that if he could write the songs of a nation he cared not who made the laws. It is especially noticeable that in Congress our modern Solons sprinkle their speeches with verses with the same daily regularity that a Chinese laundryman sprinkles his linen.

Even a Congressman, however, has difficulty in reading poetry aloud to the satisfaction of his audience. Not a few orators avoid this stumbling block by obtaining leave to extend their remarks in the "Record" without delivering their speeches in full. Sometimes this causes trouble. During the course of the debates on woman suffrage three United States Senators obtained such permission and each took occasion to pay eloquent tribute to the glory of woman. Their speeches appear on succeeding pages of the "Record". All three addresses conclude with the same thirty-six line poem. The verses were brought into the speeches in this manner:

First Senator: "The poet has already told my story—"

Second Senator: "I am reminded of the words—"

Third Senator: "The lines come to me in this eventful hour—"

In the preparation of their eloquence the three had made use of the same book of quotations. From a careful inspection of the "Record" the following facts are established:

1. The favorite selection is, "The Bivouac of the Dead".
2. It is rivaled in popularity by the couplet beginning, "The saddest words of tongue or pen—"
3. There is no lover of poetry like a Southern Democrat.
4. Old-line Republicans confine their quotations to Tennyson and Browning.
5. Progressives dote on Kipling.
6. One Senator who perpetrated "Horatius at the Bridge" recently has so far escaped unharmed, thus showing the forgiving spirit of the times.

In spite of poets and near poets, of the lilting melodies of forgotten lyrics and the sad strains of peaceful elegies, of blank verses and verses that should be blank, all good Congressmen still believe the words quoted by some optimistic statesman and duly printed in the "Record":

And we'll all be happy yet,
You bet!

Perhaps the readers of the Gossip Shop think that they know Shakespeare. Undoubtedly they can recall the first line of Hamlet's soliloquy, Portia's speech, or Mark Antony's oration, but it is quite something else to answer the inquiries submitted by Mrs. Emma N. Carleton, of New Albany, Indiana, who is not only a reader of THE BOOKMAN but evidently a discoverer of things about Shakespeare not generally known. The first class of BOOKMAN Shakespearian scholars will now stand up and, if possible, successfully pass the following examination:

Find the chicken chase in Shakespeare's writings.

In what play does Shakespeare make a prophecy as to the downfall of England?

What gifted old-time writer declared that Shakespeare was not an Englishman?

What old-time writer called Shakespeare "Pleasant Willy"?

By what internal evidence can it be proved that Bacon was never in any way to be considered as a Shakespearian claimant?

Very much has been written of "The Story of Opal", yet quite as interest-

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ing as the book is the story of its literal resurrection as told by Ellery Sedgwick, the editor of "The Atlantic". The diary, it seems, was not in Miss Whiteley's mind when she entered his office. Her errand concerned the manuscript of "The Fairyland Around Us". This did not appeal to Mr. Sedgwick; but the girl's quaint personality attracted him, and in the course of the conversation she told him of her orphan childhood and the early years spent in the woods and lumber camps with her foster parents. Further inquiry revealed that she had kept a diary. With tears in her eyes she told him how the precious pages had been torn in a fit of anger by her foster sister, but that she had carefully preserved the innumerable fragments. A telegraphic request brought them from California to Boston; and for nine months Miss Whiteley labored industriously to piece them together. Some few were as large as a half sheet of note paper; more, scarce big enough to hold a letter of the alphabet. The paper was of all shades, sorts and sizes: butchers' bags, pressed and sliced in two, wrapping paper, the backs of envelopes—anything and everything that could hold writing. The early years of the diary are all printed in capital letters.

One of the curious things about the reconstruction of the diary is the fact that, in the beginning of the task, Opal, full of puzzlement over letters that would not shape themselves into familiar phrases, turned to her editors and was told that they were French.

"But they can't be French," she said. "I never studied French."

But French they are, nevertheless.

To write "a book on America" would take a lifetime, Mr. George tells the Gossip Shop, and he is going to give six months to it—more than many have—and is approaching the task in a respectful spirit. It is so easy, he modestly finds, to generalize on America and so easy to err. The six chapters of his forthcoming book will give impressions—"not delineations"—of New England; of the Middle West—"America in the Making"; of American character, women and literature; of the Far West; and of the vivid social activities of New York. He seems particularly anxious that the public should realize that he has not come over in the altogether too common spirit of self-complacency that some foreigners have manifested.

Mr. George is especially interested in the small-bookshop movement which is spreading over the country—such as the Sunwise Turn in New York, the Walden in Chicago, the Wayfarer's in Washington. On his recent tour he found all these conducted by educated and pleasant women, and stocked mainly with good literature. "These little bookshops are just what you need", he says; "the big ones are compelled by their overhead costs to push the stuff that sells quickly and in large quantities; that cannot be the good stuff. The little bookshop, on the other hand, can succeed only in the hands of people who like books, presumably good books. And people who like good books, as Confucius would say, are the handmaidens of wisdom and shall acquire virtue."

French men of letters are deserting the theatre for the café-concert and the music hall, says the "Mercure". Lest this statement be construed as a sign of increasing frivolity among the writing profession, we hasten to add that this movement constitutes a protest against "the tendencies which are destroying the theatre of today".

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